

REPORT TO STRONG COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE
PUBLIC PROTECTION 2018/19, PERFORMANCE REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In 2015 Cabinet requested that Strong Communities Select Committee receive six monthly performance reports on Public Protection services. Members wished to review the impact on performance of budget reductions implemented since April 2014. Annual performance is also reported through Licensing & Regulatory committee.
- 1.2 The Public Protection division comprises four distinct teams -
- (i) Environmental Health, Commercial
 - (ii) Environmental Health, Public Health
 - (iii) Licensing
 - (iv) Trading Standards & Animal Health

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of Public Protection services can be summarised as follows –
- a. Protect people from harm and promote health improvement.
 - b. Promote a fair and just trading environment for the public and businesses.
 - c. Improve the local environment to positively influence quality of life and promote sustainability.
 - d. Ensure the safety and quality of the food chain to minimise risk to human and animal health.
- 2.2 These four outcomes contribute to Wales' seven well-being goals. They directly help achieve a more prosperous, resilient, healthier and more equal county. It also resonates with this Council's Corporate Business Plan 2017/22, approved in February 2018, which sets out our priorities under the current administration to 2022.

3. RESOURCES

3.1 Staff resource

(i) Environmental Health – Commercial:-

- 6 Environmental Health Officers, 5.4 FTE's (Full Time Equivalents)
- 3 Commercial Services Officers, 2.1 FTE's
- 1 Systems Administrator, 1 FTE

(ii) Environmental Health – Public Health:-

- 5 Environmental Health Officers, 5 FTE's
- 2 Enforcement Officers, 1.6 FTE's

(iii) Licensing:-

- 5 Licensing Officers, 4 FTE's

(iv) Trading Standards & Animal Health:-

- 3 Trading Standards Officers, 3 FTE's
- 1 Senior Fair Trading Officer, 1 FTE
- 1 Fair Trading Officer, 1 FTE
- 1 Senior Animal Health Officer, 0.45 FTE (Other 0.55 FTE Regional Co-ordination role funded by WWhoTS)
- 1 Animal Health Officer, 1 FTE (long term sickness since May 2018)
- 1 Feed/Animal Health Officer, 1 FTE (Temporary to 31st March 2020)

(v) Support team:-

- 5 Support Officers, 4.1 FTE's

Above staff resource adds up to a total of 35 staff, 30.65 Full Time Equivalents. The Public Protection division also comprises the Authority's Registrar and Corporate Health & Safety services, but this report covers 1.2 services only, as directed by Members in January 2015.

3.2. Financial resource

The total budget for 2018/19 across the four services, with Support team costs spread across the professional teams, was just over £1.3 million –

<u>SERVICE</u>	Budget	Net Spend
Environmental Health – Commercial	£448,564	£441,425
Environmental Health – General public health	£391,080	£395,609
Trading Standards & Animal Health	£337,704	£339,370
Licensing	£23,056	£26,091
Management & generic costs (eg software)	£112,596	£115,587
Total	£1,313,000	£1,318,082

The budget position for the 2018/19 year was a slight overspend of £5,082. This represents 0.4% of the total annual budget.

4. PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 Internal performance monitoring – the four teams within Public Protection each complete an annual Business Service Plan. These outline annual targets, specific projects etc. and progress is reviewed regularly both by the teams themselves and Departmental Management Team.
- 4.2 External reporting – regular returns are made to the Food Standards Agency, Health & Safety Executive, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Drinking Water Inspectorate, Welsh Government and other organisations.
- 4.3 The Licensing section contributed to the Wales Audit Office's (WAO) review of the Authority's 'safeguarding' arrangements. WAO commented on our Taxi Driver Policy and a 'home to school' recommendation was referred to our Passenger Transport Unit.

4.4 2018/19 Performance (and comparison to previous years)

The right hand columns summarises performance during the 2018/19 year. The left hand columns cover the previous 4 years, to enable comparisons to be made.

The following table summarises performance data from the four service teams.

Figure One

<u>Service</u>	<u>2014/15 performance</u>	<u>2015/16 performance</u>	<u>2016/17 performance</u>	<u>2017/18 performance</u>	<u>2018/19 Performance</u>
Environmental Health (Commercial)					
Food safety full inspections	551 (100% of these programmed)	510 (100%)	502 (100%)	513 (100%)	513 (100%)
Other interventions – sampling, verification etc (Not H & S)	304	379	483	427	285
Total	855	889	985	940	798
Inspection within 28 days of scheduled date	88%	95%	88.4%	87%	88.6%
Number of new businesses opened	124	138	130	110	151

Broadly compliant food businesses (high risk)	88.5%	89.0%	90.4%	94.3%	93.2%
Broadly compliant food businesses – All	93.8%	94.0%	95.2%	97.4 %	97.2%
Service Requests - food safety	503 400 within 3 working days=79.5%	569 Total SR's 1169	718 (86% within target time) Total SR's 1340	736 Total SR's 1350	456 (85% within 3 working days) Total SR's 1463
Food Hygiene training	196	239	219	257 food handlers trained.	208 food handlers trained
Communicable Diseases cases dealt with	194	183	171 (4 outbreaks and one fatality)	183	210 including Typhoid outbreak
Health and Safety notifications Notices served		NR 3 notices served	63 accident, 33 major events 10 notices served	54 accidents, of which 9 reportable (serious injuries) 24 visits re asbestos also undertaken in the year.	41 accidents notified. 12 serious incidents investigated. 90 events reviewed 12 notices served (gas and cellar safety)
Environmental Health (General public health)					
Housing service requests (SR'S)	153 Total 128 within 3 working days=83.7%	167 Total 135 within 3 working days = 80.8%	138 Total 127 within 3 working days = 92%	153 Total 133 within 3 working days = 86.9%	164 Total 141 within 3 working days = 86%

Noise	341 Total 297 within 3 working days=87.1% 221 closed within 3 months= 64.8%	305 Total 277 within 3 working days = 90.8% 130 closed within 3 months = 42.6%	363 Total 318 within 3 working days = 87.6% 188 closed within 3 months = 51.8%	321 Total. 271 within 3 working days = 84.4% 173 closed within 3 mths = 53.9%	374 Total. 318 within 3 working days = 85% 152 closed within 3 mths = 40.6%
Statutory nuisance, excluding noise	198 Total 180 within 3 working days=90.9% 140 closed within 3 months=70.7%	148 Total 131 within 3 working days = 88.5% 75 closed within 3 months = 50.7%	179 Total 152 within 3 working days = 84.9% 84 closed within 3 months = 46.9%	142 Total. 122 within working 3 days = 85.9% 83 closed within 3 mths = 58.4%	176 Total. 145 within working 3 days = 82.4% 92 closed within 3 mths = 52.3%
Environmental Protection (fouling, littering, fly tipping etc.)	345 Total 314 within 3 working days=91% 222 closed within 3 months=64.3%	255 Total 233 within 3 working days = 91.4% 174 closed within 3 months = 68.2%	475 Total 448 within 3 working days = 94.3% 341 closed within 3 months = 71.8%	478 Total. 440 within 3 working days = 92.1% 302 closed within 3 months = 63.2%	484 Total. 446 within 3 working days = 92.1% 421 closed within 3 months = 87%
Pest Control	95 Total 84 within 3 working days=88.4%	Total 104 85 within 3 working days = 81.7%	Total 74. 51 within 3 working days = 69%	Total 71. 54 within 3 working days =76%	Total 78. 61 within 3 working days =78.2%
Licensing					
Applications dealt with by Licensing	1905 (which includes 382 Temporary Event Notices requiring a 24 hour turnaround.	1945 (this increased figure also includes all monetary transactions).	1645 (which includes 423 Temporary Event Notices (TENs) requiring a 24 hour turnaround	1668 which includes 383 TENs requiring a 24 hour turnaround	1813 applications dealt with (up by 145 on the previous year). This includes 425 TENs requiring a 24 hour turnaround (an

					increase of 42 TENS on the previous year)
Inspections carried out	624 inspections carried out (274 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment)	529 inspections carried out (240 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment)	508 inspections carried out (120 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment)	329 inspections carried out (261 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment)	325 inspections carried out (174 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment)
Service Requests carried out	932 service requests were carried out (847 - 91% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response).	740 service requests were carried out (679 - 92% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response).	879 service requests were carried out (816 - 92% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response).	868 service requests were carried out (784 - 90% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target).	974 service requests were carried out (895 - 92% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target). An increase of 106 service requests from 17/18
Trading Standards and Animal Health					
Trading Standards Visits	192	317	176	110	126
Trading Standards Complaints/Advice	669	540	428	452	443
Citizens Advice Consumer Service	419 Referrals 1158 Notifications	410 Referrals 1069 Notifications	285 Referrals 785 Notifications	302 Referrals 808 Notifications	305 Referrals 863 Notifications
Animal Health Visits	290	311	411	258	219
Animal Health Complaints/Advice	251	186	298	264	242

Inspections at our: High Risk premises, Upper Medium premises.	92% (13/14) High Risk 46% (12/16) Upper Medium	95% (57/60) Inspection programme intel led	No formal programme of inspection this year. Intel approach with focus on safeguarding in particular medical devices.	23% (25/107)	No formal programme of inspection due to other pressures including loss of Feed officer now replaced.
Feed Law Enforcement	62% High Risk (116/186)	103% of new externally funded feed programme. 156 Inspections	118% - 223 Inspections	100% - 235	100% - 212
Programmed animal health inspections	100%	100% (14 High) 40% Overall Programme	No formal programme of inspection this year	10% (30/294)	No formal programme of inspection due to long term sickness.
New Business Visits	26% TS 10% AH	76% TS 90% AH	52% TS 58% AH	56% TS 59% AH	29% TS (23/80) 66% AH (18/27)
Animal Welfare Complaints	92.5% within target response time	96% within target response time	90.4% within target response time	91.4%	92.6%
Vulnerable Scam Reports	Not reported	35 visits contact with 119 individuals	9 visits contact with 121 individuals	10 visits contact with 135 individuals	12 visits contact with 149 individuals
Other					
Freedom of Information Requests (PP Total)	77	85	61	51	66
Events requiring advice via Safety Advisory Group	110	94	102	137	156

5. ANALYSIS AND ACTIVITY 2018/19

5.1 Environmental Health – Commercial

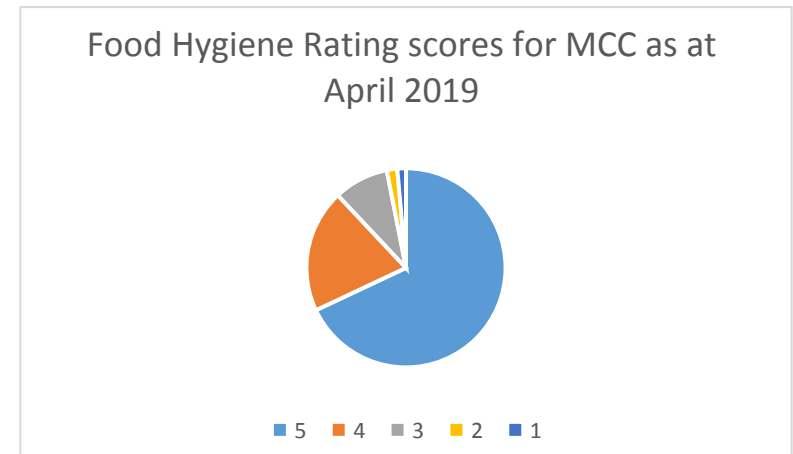
5.1.1 Food safety (food hygiene and food standards)

The Commercial team has a strong commitment to balancing our statutory work with our innovative income generating work. We are maintaining our record of inspections within target times with minor fluctuations depending on pull on the team's resources. As a result of our interventions, there has been a year on year increase in the number of high scoring premises under the Food Hygiene Rating scheme. We also promote top scoring food businesses on social media. Anecdotal evidence shows a top food hygiene score can increase a small food business income by up to £300 a week. Much work is being done with other LA's to preserve the integrity and consistency of the mandatory Welsh Food hygiene rating scheme with the proposals by the FSA on Regulating our Future.

We have had a prosecution with regards food hygiene so far this year receiving costs. Prosecution is a 'last resort' but sends out a useful signal to all other businesses that action will be taken when advice is not heeded and the serious nature of the offences.

Access - this innovative scheme is now in its 5th year, whereby a charge is made for supplementary advisory visits. Feedback from business shows that the service is very effective in increasing confidence and having a beneficial effect on the food hygiene rating. The service is particularly effective for new businesses whose owners may not have encountered enforcement Officers before. It establishes a better relationship and, through better compliance, the county gets safer food businesses. We have expanded it to any function of advice that a business may require or request. Our preferred option is to educate and advise business rather than enforcement which enables us to foster a good working relationship and a higher rate of compliance levels than the national average.

Food standards - Officers continue to provide legal advice on allergen declarations in food, protecting affected persons and we have co-ordinated a Gwent wide speciation survey looking at miss described meat and a local project on allergen awareness and then mystery shopper sampling. These have been grant funded from the FSA.



Food sampling- the food team carries out regular sampling surveys of food made and sold in Monmouthshire, in line with national guidance and topical issues. We have been the most successful LA in the SE good group in using our service allocation from the microbiological Lab obtaining 417 samples throughout the year from MCC businesses.

Primary Authority- Officers carry out work as contacts for primary authority companies. The legal requirements relating to allergen declarations etc continues to result in more contact with the Officers, including the investigation of reported incidents. The team have sought to increase partnerships and have done so with Stonegate Pubs, now approved by the Secretary of State, and with the Nationwide Caterers Association. We have continued to work with our main PA partners of SA Brains, ABHB and Marriott hotels.

5.1.2 Communicable disease control

The majority of cases for investigation are Campylobacter and Salmonella and are individual, sporadic cases. Cases of Cryptosporidium and E. Coli have also been notified. The team has investigated a number of viral outbreaks in schools, care homes and a hospital, thus protecting the most vulnerable groups in Monmouthshire. It is necessary to investigate the cause, spread and duration of viral illnesses in order to eliminate other sources of illness such as foodborne illness.

The investigation of three cases of hospitalised typhoid by Officers of the team found them to be connected via travel from a local school. Salmonella Typhi is contracted via ingestion of the pathogen via infected water and food. Our involvement and advice has led to improvements to hygiene and potable water supplies to travelling groups hiking in the outdoors, in this case the Himalayas.

We feel it is important to continue to investigate and contact cases of notifiable infectious diseases as we are quite often the first and only source of advice and information their case and it raises awareness of both preventative measures for spread of pathogens and repeat cases.

5.1.3 Health and Safety at Work

Beverage Gas Safety was a national priority for intervention in 17/18 (HSE). It continues with enforcement actions being taken in premises where there has been found to be safety breaches that could lead to personal injury. We have continued with the inspections of cellars and along with gas safety have served 12 improvement notices to remove the risk of asphyxiation and fire in takeaways and other food premises.

Fisheries (7) - following last year's fatality in Monmouthshire, all fisheries have been visited. Focus on protection of children and vulnerable people in these settings.

We are assisting the public health team with enforcement of Private Water Supplies and actively capturing information on the database for more efficient use of time.

We have continued preparing businesses for the introduction of new legislation for tattooists and special procedures which will come into being in 2019.

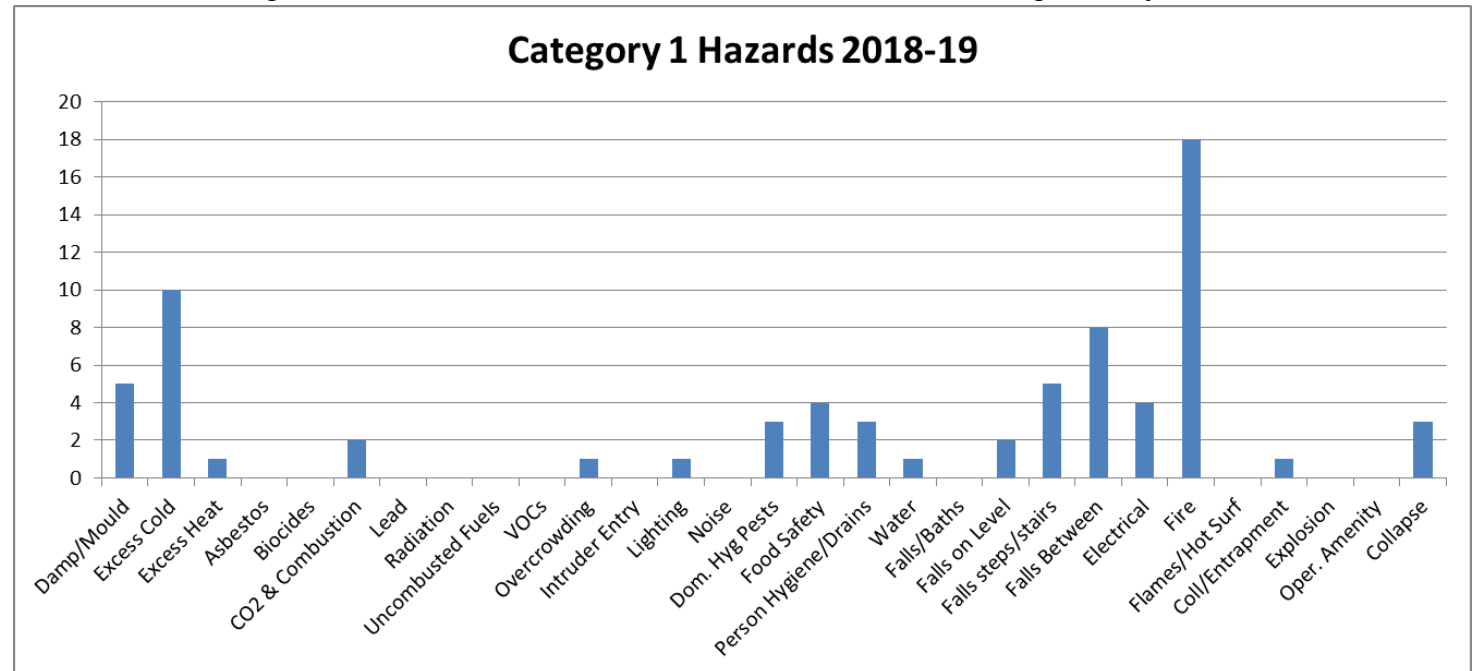
5.1.4 Income generation

Although a regulatory function, the EH Commercial team are leading the field in Wales for innovative income generation. Further ideas are being developed and implemented, for example our MAPP (Monmouthshire Alternative to Prosecution Policy). We continue to try and think ‘outside the box’ and seek new income opportunities.

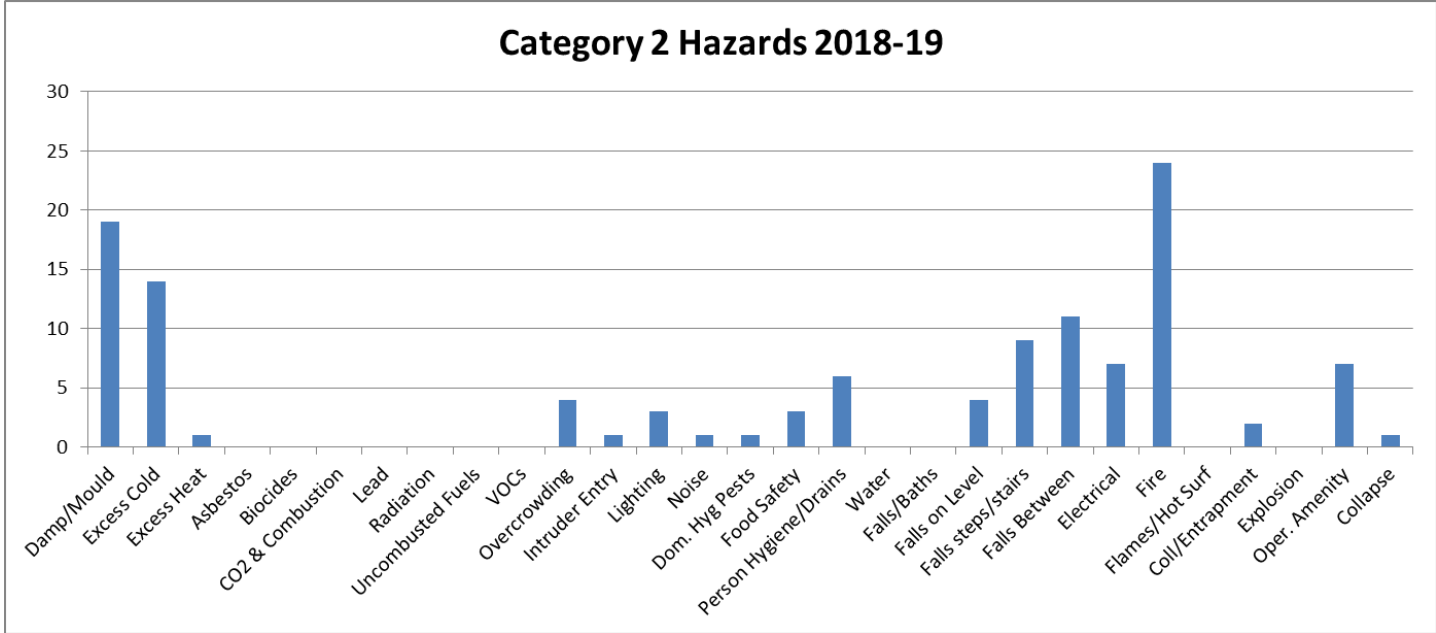
5.2 Environmental Health – Public Health

5.2.1 Housing

In 18/19 the team have continued to provide an effective and early response to complaints and requests for advice in the private rented sector. A total of 164 enquiries have been received with 141 of these responded to within 3 working days (86%). Enquiries can be regarding a range of concerns including threat of landlord harassment / unlawful eviction but generally relate to concerns with the condition of the rented property. Out of these enquiries a total of 78 dwellings were inspected with 68 category 1 hazards (most serious) and 115 category 2 hazards identified. Of the total of 183 hazards a high percentage relate to damp, cold, falls between levels and fire safety issues. The hazard profiles are illustrated as follows:



In the 78 inspections, 112 adults and 55 children were exposed to significant hazards. 55 of those adults and 17 children were protected by landlords undertaking remedial works to date. Officers engage with landlords, make clear their responsibilities under the Housing legislation and seek their cooperation to undertake the required works to remove the hazards identified. A range



of enforcement actions are available and used where landlords do not cooperate such as the service of Improvement Notices.

The team is being active in fulfilling the Council’s responsibilities in promoting and supporting Rent Smart Wales (RSW) with regard to the registration and licensing of landlords, which has been a requirement in Wales since 23rd November 2016. At the end of 31st March 2019 there were 4683 registered rental properties in the County, (social landlords not included).

5.2.2 Noise

The complaint level in the first 2 quarters of 18/19 increased substantially by 20.6% compared to the same period in 17/18, with a total of 251 complaints received compared to 208 previously. This was probably linked to the long hot summer period and impacted on the team’s ability to deal with other public health matters during this period. The year-end total of 374 complaints is the highest recorded to date. Dog barking and loud music continue to be the greatest source of annoyance to our residents.

Despite the substantial increase in complaints, our initial response times remain high at 85% within 3 working days although case closure rates within 3 months dropped from 54% to 41%

5.2.3 Environmental Protection

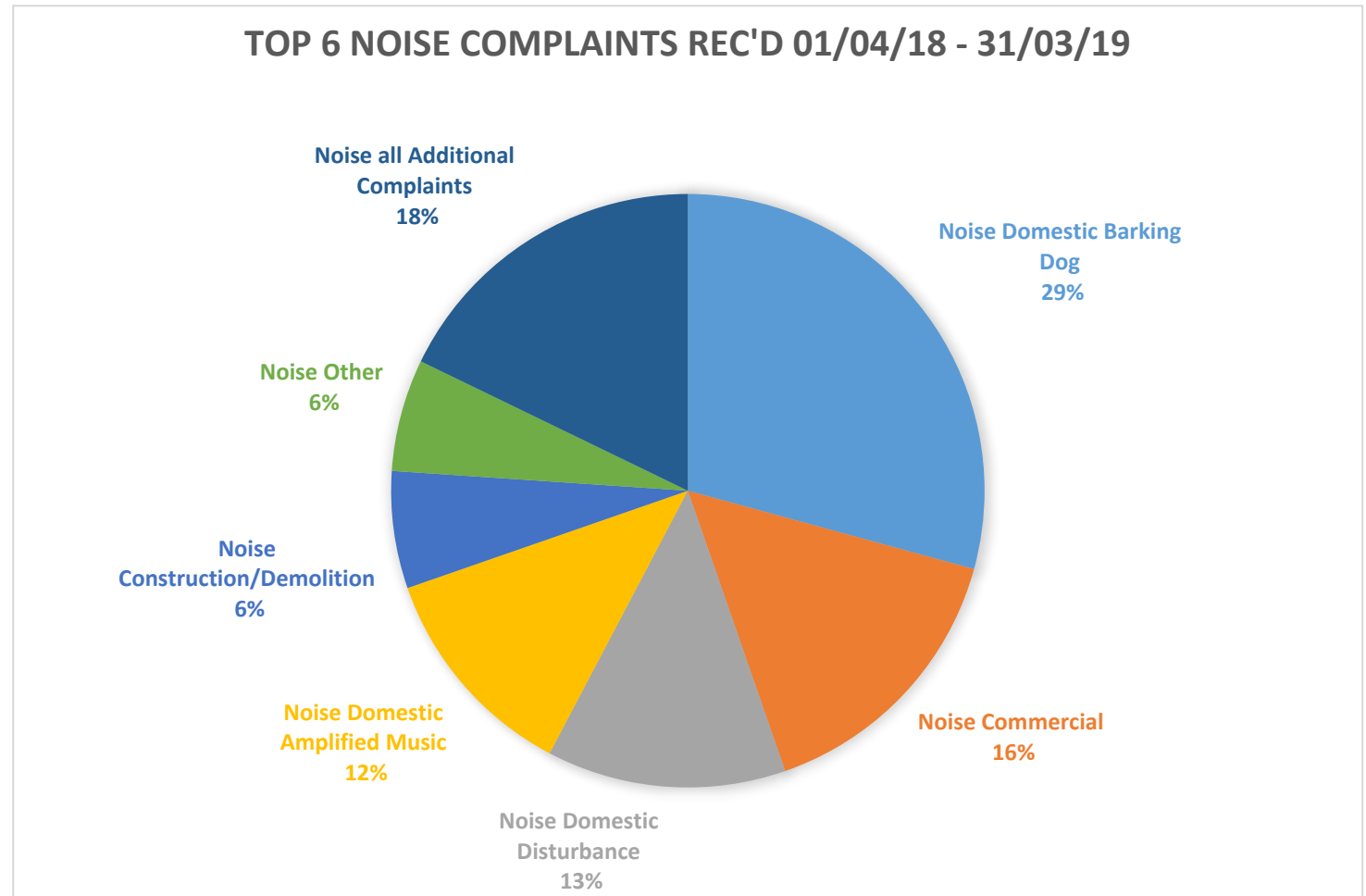
The high number of complaints received in the last couple of years continued to be sustained in 18/19 with 484 complaints relating to matters such as fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, dog fouling and littering. There were 195 service requests relating to abandoned vehicles.

Initial response times are very high at 92.1% and full credit to the team as case closure rates within 3 months increased very substantially to 87% from the previous year of 63%.

The 'Give Dog Fouling the Red Card' scheme led by the team together with the Waste and Street Cleaning section, designed to empower local communities to deal with local fouling problems, has progressed into its fourth year with the number of participating Town and Community councils increasing to 22. Members report that dog fouling has generally reduced in their areas, although 'hot spots' persist, and complaints to the team have shown a trend of reduction since commencement of the scheme with an all-time low recorded.

13/14 – 169 complaints

14/15 – 146 complaints



15/16 – 92 complaints

16/17 – 121 complaints

17/18 – 106 complaints

18/19 – 90 complaints

One fixed penalty notice served for a littering offence from a vehicle and one served for a fly tipping offence, both paid.

5.2.4 Private Water Supplies

The team has the responsibility for fulfilling the Council's duty of risk assessing all 'large' and 'small' private water supplies (PWS), where water is intended for human consumption. Improvements are undertaken where necessary to ensure a wholesome and sufficient water supply is provided. We currently have 128 'small' and 55 'large' supplies, the vast majority of which have received an initial risk assessment, although because of a change in Regulations at the end of 2017 approximately 30 'new' supplies require an initial assessment. There is an ongoing statutory requirement to risk assess the supplies every 5 years. Progress in dealing with these increased significantly in 18/19 through the targeting of resources to this area of work:

- Supplies awaiting first inspection - 26. Of these 3 undertaken.
- Supplies awaiting follow up visit to check required works - 54. Of these 32 undertaken.
- Supplies awaiting a 2nd Risk Assessment - 31. Of these 11 undertaken.

5.2.5 Pest Control

Complaint levels remain very similar with 78 received compared with 71 in 17/18. The majority of these relate to rats.

5.2.6 Construction

Engagement with the developers of the A465 dual carriageway and electrification of the South Wales main rail line has continued, and also in progress with the proposed M4 development. Our interest is to ensure that the contractors do all that can be reasonably expected to control noise, dust and air pollution levels. A substantial work commitment is needed in these areas which is generally not reflected in the Service Request statistics, with successful engagement hopefully resulting in low complaint numbers.

5.2.7 Air Quality

The team met its target to complete the 34 visits planned for 18/19 of the industrial permitted sites and petroleum certified sites which we have responsibility for from a pollution legislation perspective.

We continue to monitor traffic related pollution (nitrogen dioxide) in our 4 major towns and provide advice in regular meetings of the steering groups in the Chepstow and Usk Air Quality Management areas. There is just 1 location in the County, on Hardwick Hill, Chepstow, where nitrogen dioxide levels continue to exceed the objective level set by legislation but this dropped substantially from 51.1ug/m3 in 2017 to 43.0.

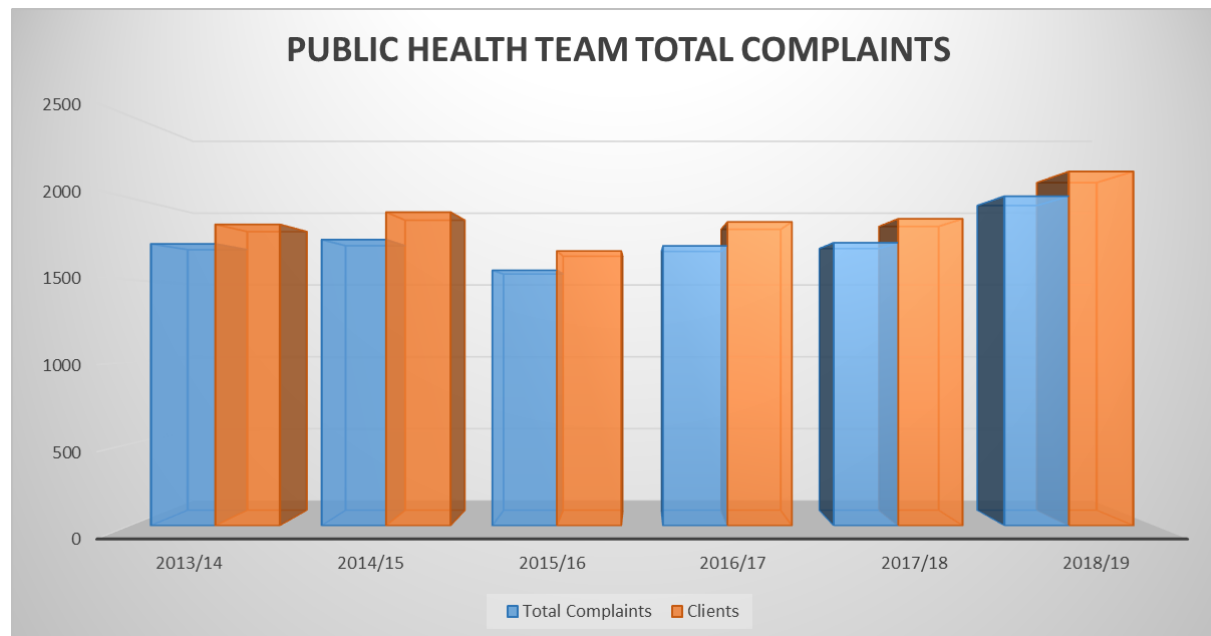
In the summer holiday of 2018 Environmental Health installed a continuous air quality sensor at Chepstow Comprehensive and Usk Schools. The sensor can continuously monitor nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, ozone, air temperature, humidity, and pressure and both the schools and Environmental Health can view the live data via a website.

It is the team's hope that the schools will use the data to help in their classes to educate the pupils about air quality, and that this message will also reach parents, and hopefully improve air quality during the school run. To this end a number of educational packages have also been made available to the schools.

Two further monitors will shortly be installed in the Caldicot and Monmouth 21st Century schools.

5.2.8 Total Enquiries

The total number of service requests dealt with by the team across the range of functions increased substantially with a total of 2011 service requests received which is a 16.5% increase compared with 17/18. The previous highest year was in 14/15 with 1914 service requests but 18/19 saw a 15% increase in comparison.



5.3 Licensing

5.3.1 General

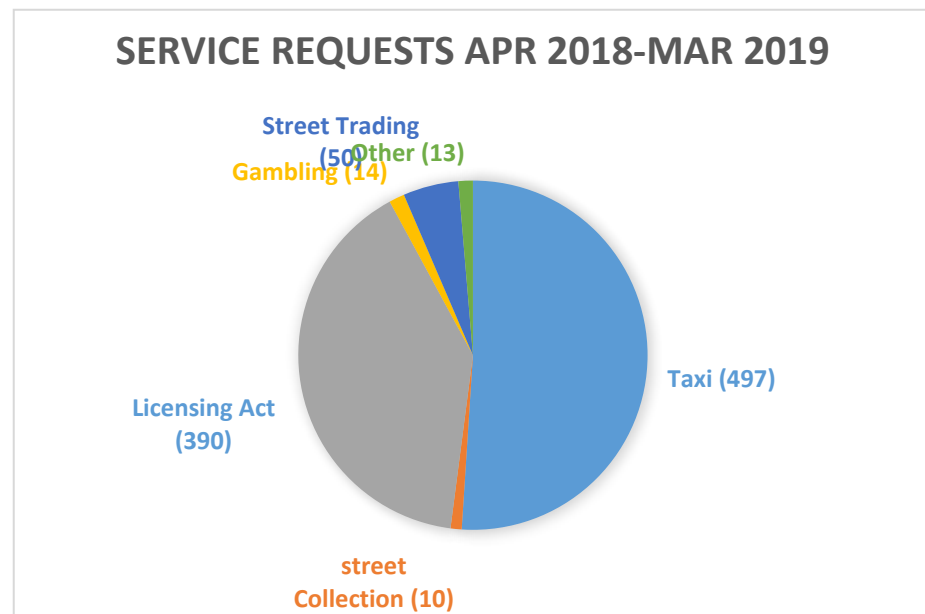
The Licensing team deals with a variety of licences, dealing with pubs, restaurants, off-licences and takeaways, taxis, street trading (e.g. burger vans), street/house to house collections, (e.g. charity collections in the street or bag drops at homes), gambling (e.g. betting shops, racecourse, one armed bandits in pubs/clubs, raffles etc.), scrap metal collectors and sites. The team are also authorised to deal with sex establishments, boats and hypnotism.

974 requests for service were processed by the Licensing between April 2018 – March 2019, an increase of 106 from the previous year. A breakdown of the 974 requests as shown:-

The majority of the services requests are for the taxi/private hire trade, 497 out of the 974 (55 of those were complaints regarding the trade).

Followed closely by the Licensing Act (alcohol, entertainment and late night hot food and drink). 390 service requests out of 974 (40 of those were complaints).

1813 applications were also processed between April 2018-March 2019 (an increase of 145 for the same period the previous year).



Some of the work carried out by Licensing during this period includes:-

5.3.2 Pubs, Restaurants, Off-licences, Clubs and Takeaways

Night Time Economy and Joint Enforcement

Some of the statutory enforcement officers under the Licensing Act 2003 meet monthly, namely Licensing, Police, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Social Services and Public Health. These meetings raise issues regarding premises that are causing

problems and all receive follow up visits by Licensing. During the year Licensing had to deal with reported incidents of noise issues, violence, anti-social behaviour, drug usage and reports of underage drinking. 144 premises received an inspection during this period.

Immigration

A joint operation was conducted between Licensing, the Police and Immigration in Abergavenny at a takeaway on 12th May 2018. It was found that all persons had the right to work in the United Kingdom. The visit was as a result of information received that persons who worked there were living above the takeaway and the employer was receiving their benefits, which had modern day slavery implications. Police made a number of arrests at that time but the case was dropped, as no one was willing to testify. Monitoring of this venue continues.

On 9th August 2018 Licensing, Immigration and Fire Officers visited 3 takeaways in Abergavenny. There were no immigration concerns. However, the Fire Service are dealing with one premises that had no means of escape for those living above the venue other than through the shop itself and this is being followed up accordingly. Another venue did not have CCTV working despite this being a licensing condition. The CCTV would be essential at this venue as late night takeaways can be a hotspot for violence and anti-social behaviour. A warning letter was issued.

On 29th August 2018 Licensing and Immigration visited 2 premises in Abergavenny. At a store one male found working without right to work. Immigration Officers made arrest on this occasion and Premises Licence being considered for review. At a kebab house two males found working without the right to work. The premises was closed on the night. A further visit was conducted at this premises for licensing breaches, resulting in a pending prosecution.

On 18th October 2018, a joint operation was conducted by Licensing, Immigration and anti-terrorism Police on a restaurant in Monmouth following Intel on illegal workers and illegal prayer room. No illegal workers were found at this venue.

On 13th February 2019 Licensing and Immigration visited 10 premises takeaways/stores in Caldicot, no illegal workers found.

On 21st February 2019 Licensing and Immigration visited 4 restaurants/takeaways visited in the Monmouth area, no illegal workers found. Intelligence was also received regarding a nail bar. Although no licence required a visit was conducted by Immigration where it was found they were living at the venue and further investigation to be pursued.

Safeguarding

In September 2018, Licensing, the Police and Social Services received a report about a store owner in the North of the county, who may have possible safeguarding issues. Licensing and the Police, along with an interpreter visited the venue to request measures are put in place to avoid the person being alone with children as a precautionary measure, until the case is determined.

A change of condition to include a robust CCTV system and retention of footage has been included following this visit. On-going monitoring by Licensing along with Monmouthshire's Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) group - which includes the Police, Social Services and other counselling agencies.

Guidance, training, poster campaign and beer mats have been issued to the hotel/pub trade. The message is filtering through although some still need improvement. There were two recent cases that Licensing and the Police have dealt with as follows:-

Case 1

Staff at a hotel reported concerns to the Police when a young female booked into the hotel with an older male. When questioned by staff at the hotel, both parties had said differing things in terms of what relationship they were to each other. On this occasion, the Police investigated and there was no concern. Licensing praised the staff and informed the head office of the actions advising that we would rather a call if in doubt than not at all.

Case 2

Police received a call regarding two young girls and a male, purchasing alcohol at a store then booking into a hotel in a three person room. When the room was visited they claimed they were 'just chilling'. The hotel was advised on possible safeguarding implications and safeguarding training was given to the staff by Police and Licensing present. The training advised them to look out for:

- *Adult guests who appear secretive about their visit or trying to conceal that they are with a young person*
- *Adult guests refusing to leave a credit card imprint and paying cash*
- *Adult Guests requesting a room that is isolated*
- *Numerous adults and young people coming to a hotel who do not appear to have a reason for being there or high levels of visitors to a guest room*
- *Guests who move in and out of the premises regularly at unusual hours*
- *Guests arriving and asking for specific rooms number without knowing the name of the person the room is booked under*
- *Adult guests who don't want their room cleaned*

5.3.3 Taxis

In 2018/19, 31 drivers had spot checks, along with 57 vehicles, 1 vehicle and 30 operator visits and revisits. No major incidents to report and minor defects to vehicles were rectified following a warning.

Joint Operations

On 7th September 2018 a joint operation took place between Licensing and the Passenger Transport Unit (PTU) at an Abergavenny school. One vehicle inspected was found to have a broken rear window and driven by a person who did not have the licence to drive over 8 seater vehicles, potentially putting children in danger. This person did hold a licence for under 8 seats with this Authority and as such was referred to Committee to assess if he was fit and proper to continue to hold a licence. The driver also received a fixed penalty notice for the unroadworthy vehicle. The owner of the vehicle was also referred to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee. Both driver and owner had their licences suspended for 4 months until they conduct a knowledge test.

On 6th, 14th and 28th November 2018, also on 5th February 2019, joint inspections between Licensing and PTU were conducted at Abergavenny schools. 37 vehicles in total were inspected, 3 receiving penalty points for not carrying first aid kits and spare wheel/puncture repair kit.

On 7th March 2019 joint operation between Licensing and PTU conducted at a Chepstow school. All vehicles inspected complied.

Safeguarding

Taxi and Private Hire Policy was updated and adopted at the Licensing and Regulatory Committee on 12th June 2018. The policy now includes an updated suitability test for applicants and existing licence holders in the taxi trade, in line with those recommended by the Institute of Licensing.

In November 2018, following information from Police and Social Services, Licensing revoked a driver regarding the alleged conduct of the driver towards a child.

5.3.4 Gambling

In 2018/19 the Gambling Policy was revised. It involved wide consultation working closely with other Authorities, Public Health, the Police and the Gambling Commission. It also refers to the Chief Medical Officer for Wales Annual Report 2016-17. This report referred to the potential harms caused by gambling for the individual include anxiety, stress, depression and alcohol and substance misuse. These factors are likely to have a wider impact on family and friends. Further family problems can include 'money troubles' and family breakdown, as well as neglect and violence towards any partner or children. There are higher rates of separation and divorce among problem gamblers compared to the general population. Further impacts of gambling include the inability to function at work, and financial problems which can lead to homelessness. The potential harms from gambling to wider society include fraud, theft, loss of productivity in the workforce, and the cost of treating this addiction. Gambling harm not only affects the individual, but the family and wider society. The new policy took into account all of these matters.

In March 2019 an underage operation was conducted by Licensing, with the Police and Trading Standards. The operation was to check if pubs in the Abergavenny and Chepstow permitted the sale of alcohol and allowed the use of gaming machines to persons under 18 years old. 8 premises were visited, results as follows -

- 1 allowed gaming and the sale of alcohol
- 4 allowed gambling and refused an alcohol sale
- 3 premises refused entry checking I.D. on the door

Warning letters were issued to those premises that failed the operation and monitoring to continue.

5.4 Trading Standards & Animal Health

5.4.1 Feed

Following the three successful years of the regional approach to Feed Law enforcement, 2018/19 achieved completion once again albeit with lower inspection targets. With over two thirds of the region's total inspections falling in Monmouthshire (just over 55% this particular year), this has allowed us to retain the additional Officer with vital knowledge and skills (not just in feed) and without any cost to the Authority. Unexpectedly though that Officer had to resign due to personal circumstances and that has had a direct effect on the delivery of this year's programme in quarters 1 and 2. Upskilling of other Officers has proven vital to enable this work to be continued. An emergency replacement was appointed in October 2018, but this transition did have a significant impact on the wider trading standards remit.

5.4.2 Animal Health

As previously reported, since the loss of the additional funding, animal health is now over 90% reactive. As strategic lead for Wales Heads of Trading Standards in relation to animal health, the Trading Standards team leader has been heavily involved in working with Welsh Government to develop a Partnership Delivery Plan, with associated additional funding. This is based on a regional approach and mirrors the footprint of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. Monmouthshire has approximately 50% of the critical control points and animal related premises within this region, but current capacity, at 1.5 FTE's, limits this opportunity. A vacancy has been combined with a wider regional resource to create a new post which has now been filled with an experienced, qualified animal health officer. This role has a Regional Coordination element for Animal Health across Wales.

The remaining fulltime officer unfortunately has suffered a serious illness and has currently been on long term sickness absence for the last year. Clearly this has created significant pressures on the service and is being closely monitored. It has also coincided with a noticeable rise in the number of animal licences and enquiries relating to Home Boarders, which is demonstrating that current resource is struggling to cope with service demands.

5.4.3 Fair Trading

There are ongoing investigations into further supplies of illicit tobacco and a further pending prosecution.

From 1 April 2018, landlords of buildings within the scope of the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) must not renew existing tenancies or grant new tenancies if the building has less than the minimum energy performance certificate (EPC) rating of E, it applies to non-domestic and domestic properties. Presentations were made to Monmouthshire and Torfaen Landlords Forum. Primary Authority related enquiries has led to a couple of more time consuming pieces of work.

A Local trader started to generate a number of complaints particularly in relation to vulnerable adults which has led to a joint investigation with another South Wales Authority, this continues to progress with open dialogue and guidance on future practices.

A Rogue Trader incident in January where a vulnerable resident was being asked for £8,000 for some tarmacking has led to a number of visits and advice being offered to the resident in conjunction with Police support for the victim.

5.4.4 Consumer Protection

A priority for the service has been dealing with a variety of scams and bringing them to the attention of both the public and businesses whenever possible. We are all potential victims and, by reaching out and working alongside adult safeguarding, vulnerable victims can be kept out of overburdened local care systems.

The key focus has continued to be working with vulnerable victims through priority referrals and ensuring they are given the advice and assistance required and/or referred as appropriate. Call Blockers have been distributed to the vulnerable who have been targeted by scam calls, and support given to WASP (Wales Against Scams Partnership) on behalf of the Authority, including initiatives such as Friends Against Scams and Mail Marshalls.

There have been a few multi-agency approaches undertaken targeting rogue traders, doorstep callers, poachers and itinerant businesses.

5.4.5 Weights & Measures

Participation in a nationwide survey looking at national and local supermarkets scales, initiated following intelligence that where inspections are no longer able to be carried out proactively there is evidence that equipment is not legal and/or accurate. Local manufacturers and packers continue to be supported as much as possible.

5.4.6 Underage Sales

Additional resource has been agreed to develop the local intelligence picture and has identified a number of concerns. This work will continue with associated advice and further investigations undertaken as determined appropriate.

5.4.7 Air Quality – Lorry Watch

Vehicle spotter reports continue to be followed up with checks that the vehicles are legitimately travelling through the two restricted areas in Usk. These vehicles contribute significantly to the levels of air pollution but the majority are legitimately using the routes.

5.4.8 Income Generation

In 2018/19 Feed funding generated approximately £16,000 allowing us to retain additional capacity. Animal Health PDP regional co-ordination and additional project work, Primary Authority and other regional initiatives brought in around £14,000.

5.5 **Event Safety Advisory Group**

A number of Public Protection staff are involved in Monmouthshire's Event Safety Advisory Group, (ESAG). This is a partnership designed to help organisers run safe and successful events. It is recognised a proactive advisory stance is preferable to reacting to problems after events have occurred. Events held in 18/19 included food festivals, music concerts, agricultural shows, cycling events etc. and safety/noise/licensing/other advice was provided. As per Figure One, events that ESAG monitor and review have increased each year. 156 were reviewed during 18/19.

6 **PERFORMANCE SUMMARY 2018/19 year**

- 6.1 Public Protection teams, with only a small number of exceptions, continue to meet the Authority's legal obligations. However, Officers are typically operating at maximum level and are put under increased pressure when colleagues have any long term absence. Where pressures are found, for example regarding our private water supply (PWS) duties, managers have collaborated to find workable solutions. There will be increased attention to address PWS activity (5.2.4) in 2019/20. Another pressurised area in 18/19 was Animal Health, with specific actions taken to address through the year.
- 6.2 There have been some significant increases in service requests across the teams, so there has been a need to prioritise this reactive work over our proactive activities. For example (5.2.8) the Public Health team have seen a 16% increase in complaints received when comparing with the previous year.
- 6.3 The performance data in Figure One illustrates the Commercial team and Licensing are maintaining proactive and reactive services well. As outlined in the analyses in Section 5, the Public Health and Trading Standards/Animal Health teams have some pressures, due to work volumes and limited Officer capacity. Joint working with Immigration and event support have increased.
- 6.4 This year more work had been undertaken to supplement our safeguarding role. Services typically protect some of our most vulnerable members of society, and this report has highlighted specific pieces of work. These include Licensing working with Immigration services, eg. work with local hotels (5.3.2), and Trading Standards intervening with rogue traders (5.4.3) and scams (5.4.4).

6.5 Members can gain some assurance that performance is in line with other Authorities via regular monitoring by the external governing bodies referred to in section 4.2, for example, the Food Standards Agency. This summer Environmental Health will be involved in a follow up Wales Audit Office review of services.

7 2019/20 AND BEYOND

- 7.1 A six month update brief will be provided for this Committee in November 2019, to ensure performance continues as required legally and as defined in our Business Plans.
- 7.2 Public Protection services will continue to seek more capacity to deal with more air quality activity, private housing interventions and consumer protection issues. Our 2018/21 Business Plans are seeking to better reflect our longer term vision and future planning. This tallies with the Well Being of Future Generations expectations, with Public Protection services contributing directly to a more prosperous, resilient, healthier and more equal county. Digital solutions will be pursued to help capacity issues.
- 7.3 When new legislative requirements are introduced, via Welsh Government or Westminster, our professional bodies will seek proper funding to implement. Provisions of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 are now being implemented, to include licensing of intimate piercing and new age restrictions. The Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report for 16/17 was released in February 2018, with a big focus on 'gambling and health'. Public Protection services will link with other partners, eg. Gambling Commission, to seek to protect 'problem gamblers' noting the public health impacts on individuals, families and communities. New Minimum Unit Pricing legislation will be implemented with funding to ensure Trading Standards can work with business to ensure compliance with the new requirements.
- 7.4 Collaborative opportunities are being considered at regional and national level, and this Authority will play a part in developing future service models. Further income generation opportunities will continue to be pursued.
- 7.5 Our services, together with delivering statutory responsibilities, acts on local intelligence and welcomes input from local Councillors, other stakeholders, etc. to improve outcomes for our citizens. The services enjoy an excellent reputation, due to the commitment of the Officers, and will continue to contribute to the wider agendas and our core purposes, as provided in 2.1. To protect existing budgets, other routes will be sought to improve the profile of these services, both locally and nationally.