

SHARED REGULATORY SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote Meeting held on 20th March, 2024.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Present:

Representing Bridgend County Borough Council – Councillor R. Goode (Chair) and Councillor M. Lewis.

Representing Cardiff City and County Council – Councillor M. Michael.

Representing the Vale of Glamorgan Council – Councillors P. Drake and R. Sivagnanam.

(a) Announcement –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Chair read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing”.

(b) Apology or Absence –

This was received from Councillor D. De’Ath (Vice-Chair) (Cardiff City and County Council).

(c) Minutes –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 31st January, 2024 be approved as a correct record.

(d) Declarations of Interest –

No declarations of interest were received.

(e) Shared Regulatory Services Overview and Update Report (DEH) –

The report apprised the Joint Committee of the work of the service and progress toward completing the actions contained in the Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Business Plans.

The report contained information outlining how the service was working to achieve better outcomes for residents and businesses within the region through a series of different actions and work programmes. The report provided an overview of activities undertaken during the quarter, detailed under the following areas:

- Human Resources
- Financial Position Quarter 3 – Appendix 1
- Performance Monitoring – Appendix 2
- Improving Public Health – Health protection
- Sunbed safety
- Welsh Government consultation on Special Procedures (acupuncture, body Piercing etc)
- Empty Homes Work
- Protecting the Environment – Air Quality
- Protecting the Environment – XL Bully ban
- Supporting the Local Economy – Primary Authority update
- Supporting the Local Economy – Training update
- Trading Standards Impacts and Outcomes
- Enforcement Activity – Appendix 5

In terms of financial challenges facing the Service and the impact on staff, the Head of Service stated that it was a major concern which was why an SRS Staff Survey was used to provide some better understanding of how staff were feeling. Staff concerns would also be managed on a day by day basis with discussions with supervisors and line managers.

Councillor Sivagnanam commented that the implementation of an apprenticeship scheme was extremely positive and would assist with the filling of vacancies, but given budget challenges that would likely impact pay, she queried ways aimed at attracting people of all ages to choose a career within the SRS. The Head of Service advised that with the apprenticeship scheme, it would provide the ability to get into schools and colleges to actually engage with younger people and increase the visibility of environmental health and trading standards careers. The Head of Service added that the “Grow your Own” model was working extremely well with several staff members gaining qualifications and promotion.

With regards to performance, the Joint Committee was advised that Members would recall the challenges faced by the Service in recovering lost ground in respect of the full food programme required by the Food Law Code of Practice. It was reported that between September 2021 and March 2023, officers had worked hard in delivering against the Food Standards Agency COVID Recovery Plan for Local Authorities. Since 1st April, 2023, delivery against the full food programme had resumed, and the shortfall in budgeted posts (compared to the number needed to meet the demands placed on the service in complying with the Food Law Code of Practice) continued to be plugged through the use of contractors, paid on a per-visit basis. The net result at the end of Q3 was a very positive picture as illustrated by the various performance metrics for food.

In reply to a query regarding the impact on air quality following the introduction of the 20mph speed limit, the Operational Manager - Enterprise and Specialist Services stated that for a proper assessment, the Service would require a full year's data set. Initial information from last year had indicated improvements to air quality, but that could not be specifically attributed to the reduced speed limits.

The Chair queried the Planning process and the development of new houses in the Park Street area of Bridgend, referring to the impact on air quality. In response the Operational Manager - Enterprise and Specialist Services stated that the developer would have demonstrated the impacts on air quality, and provide any mitigations to alleviate any potential increases in pollution. The SRS would be a statutory consultee and would be able to make comment on any mitigations put forward or required.

Finally, the Committee wanted to express its thanks and appreciation to all SRS staff for their hard work and commitment.

RESOLVED – T H A T the contents of the report be noted and agreed.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.