

Meeting of:	Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, 21 June 2023
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Homes and Safe Communities
Report Title:	Shared Regulatory Services Annual Report
Purpose of Report:	To advise members on the performance and financial position of the Shared Regulatory Service for the 2022/23 financial year.
Report Owner:	Head of Shared Regulatory Services Head of Finance, Vale of Glamorgan Council
Responsible Officer:	Director of Environment and Housing
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Advice has been sought from the partner Councils
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for the Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Shared Regulatory Service (SRS) is a collaboration between Bridgend County Borough Council, the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Council that commenced on the 1st May 2015, and is charged with the provision of Regulatory Services across the three Authorities. • The Joint Working Agreement requires the Head of SRS and the Head of Finance to produce an Annual Report which, once approved by the Committee, is forwarded to the partner Councils. • The report provides assurance that during 2022/23, the Shared Service has largely recovered performance across its traditional metrics after the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. There is however a way to go in clearing the inevitable backlogs in some areas of programmed work. • The report also reflects on additional demands being placed upon the Service, through for example, Government expectation that new areas of legislation will be enforced despite there being no new funding. This at a time when the Service has implemented a core services budget saving of 3% for the year ahead. • The £8.331m 2022/23 Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Budget was agreed by Committee on the 14th December 2021, which included an assumed 2% pay award. 	

- The July 2022 National Employers for Local Government Services pay offer was accepted late 2022, thus resulting in a budget shortfall of £268k - although this has been offset by vacancies and other underspends in the service during 2022/23.
- The adverse variances at year end shown against Cardiff and the Vale can be associated with the Authority Specific elements of the SRS budget, and is further detailed in paragraphs 2.72 to 2.82 of this report.
- As at the 31st March 2023, the SRS has achieved an unaudited outturn deficit of £63k against the 2022/23 £8.331m budget. The forecast outturn position is illustrated on the following table:

	Gross Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance
Authority	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	1,777	1,703	74
Cardiff	4,811	4,936	(125)
Vale	1,743	1,755	(12)
Total Gross Expenditure	8,331	8,394	(63)

- This position is subject to the completion of the Audit Wales audit of these accounts.

Recommendation

1. That the Joint Committee approves the report, and authorises the Chief Executive, Vale of Glamorgan Council, to forward a copy of the report to the Heads of Paid Service for the other partner Councils.
2. That the 2022/23 unaudited outturn position is noted

Reason for Recommendations

1. To meet the requirements set out in Clause 5.1 of the Joint Working Agreement.

Background

- 1.1 Under the Joint Working Agreement, the Shared Regulatory Service (SRS) is required to produce an annual report that covers the operational and financial performance of the service for the preceding year. Clause 5 of the Joint Working Agreement states:

"The Joint Committee shall receive in each year at its annual meeting which shall be held no later than 30th June the report of the Head of Regulatory Services and the Lead Financial Officer in respect of the functions delegated to the Joint Committee relating to the twelve months ending 31st March of that year and a copy thereof shall be forwarded to the Chief Executive of each Participant.

1.2 The report shall include:-

- (i) *A statement showing the performance of the Regulatory Service Functions and progress in achieving the Objectives and delivering the Business Plan.*
- (ii) *a summary revenue account and statement of capital spending including the distribution or use of any revenue surpluses and the financing of any capital expenditure"*

1.3 This is the eighth report produced under this requirement and covers the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. If the content of this report is agreed, a copy of the report must be sent to the Head of Paid Service of each of the three Councils along with the SRS Business Plan for 2023/24. This annual report outlines many of the actions undertaken at each partner Council to deliver the wide range of statutory functions assigned to the Service. The report provides a review of operations across the service, a summary of the financial position, and outlines performance against the 2022/23 service objectives.

Operating the Shared Regulatory Service

1.4 The Shared Regulatory Service (SRS) operates across Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Through a collaborative model, it delivers a range of statutory services, that are critical to maintaining the health, safety and economic wellbeing of local communities. The operating model delivers an integrated service for the Trading Standards, Environmental Health, and Licensing functions, which has three service delivery sectors focusing upon the customer rather than the traditional professional delivery model.

- Neighbourhood Services: activities relating to residential premises or having an impact on the local community.
- Commercial Services: activities relating to business premises (generally where national standards apply).
- Enterprise and Specialist Services: specialist areas of work and income generating services.

1.5 As a regional organisation, providing regulatory services across three local authority areas, the SRS seeks to place the corporate priorities and stated outcomes of the three councils at the heart of all its activities. Using them as a focus, the strategic priorities for the Shared Regulatory Service of

- Safeguarding the Vulnerable
- Improving Health and wellbeing
- Protecting the Environment
- Supporting the local economy
- Maximising the use of resources

provide a robust base for achieving the outcomes identified in previous business plans and the partner Councils' corporate aspirations.

1.6 The Joint Working Agreement, executed in April 2015, and updated in July 2017, underpins the entire service provision. The JWA contains a number of "milestones and requirements". In accordance with those requirements:

- The Wales Audit Office completed an independent financial audit of the service in September 2022; there were no recommendations for improvement.
- The Business Plan for 2023/24 is presented for political approval in papers to the June 2023 Joint Committee meeting.
- The Joint Committee will receive an audited statement of accounts for 2022/23 in September 2023.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

2.1 The 2021/22 Annual Report illustrated that the Shared Service had delivered the necessary financial savings and delivered the majority of the business plan actions. The Key Milestones set for 2022/23 were:

- *Delivery of the SRS Business Plan 2022-2023 and the associated corporate priorities assigned to the SRS by the partner Councils*
- *To support the partner councils and other agencies to manage the impact of any resurgence of Covid-19*
- *To monitor the implementation of new legislation and any requirements imposed by such legislation upon the Service, for example the Welsh Government requirements around special procedures.*
- *To contribute to the climate change goals in each of the partner authorities through effective enforcement of environmental controls such as those regulating energy efficiency in the private rented housing sector.*
- *To consult with staff and develop a recruitment and retention strategy comprising actions for the short, medium and longer term in order to attract, develop and retain skilled staff.*
- *To review the agile working arrangements for the service to ensure that technology is being exploited fully to improve service delivery.*

2.2 The 2022/23 SRS Business Plan was sufficiently realistic to recognise the need for the Service to recover, post COVID response, as it returned to its 'business as usual' work. Over the previous two years, the Service had engaged with a wide range of partners

to play a central role in protecting the health of the public. At the time of writing the 2022/23 Plan, the over-riding challenge facing the Service was in balancing the need to respond to any resurgence of COVID-19 with the need to respond to other emerging global events, while at the same time resuming fully its 'normal' programmes of work.

Human Resources

- 2.3** Recruitment and retention continue to prove challenging, and in line with other regulatory services across Wales, SRS has experienced difficulty in recruiting into a range of key posts across the Environmental Health and Trading Standards functions. The problem has been exacerbated nationally by the limited pool of suitably qualified staff and an already ageing workforce. SRS has made a commitment to 'growing our own' practitioners and to this end has been forging excellent links with academic institutions and with the relevant professional bodies. In addition, the Service continues to take the lead on development of the much-needed Regulatory Apprenticeship for Wales.
- 2.4** A service-specific staff survey was carried out in 2022, having as its focus two main themes. This was the first SRS staff survey since the early part of 2020, and thus the first post-COVID. As a result, one of the purposes of the survey was to carry out a well-being 'temperature check' on staff as they adjust to a hybrid model of working and a return to a more 'normal' way of life. Given the concerns highlighted above around recruitment and retention, the survey's other main area of interest sought views on what would make SRS as welcoming and as attractive a Service to work in as possible.
- 2.5** The survey response rate was good (62%), with staff indicating to what extent they agreed with a range of statements. In addition, colleagues contributed a wealth of free text comments under headings such as what they like best and least about their roles, what they find most challenging, and what would make SRS a more attractive place to work. A common theme throughout the staff comments was concern over workloads across the Service, with the danger of officer 'burn out' being flagged multiple times. Analysis of the survey results has revealed that the areas scoring particularly well included:
- Support of colleagues and managers
 - Flexibility and work-life balance
 - Clarity over what is expected in one's role

While the areas scoring less well included

- Feeling recognised, valued, and rewarded fairly
- Adequacy of growth and development opportunities

While there is a need to be realistic in the current public sector funding landscape, there are a number of areas that are being built on and improved to achieve positive outcomes in this context, both in the short term and the longer term.

- 2.6** Staff of the Shared Service never fail to amaze in all that they do, and this has been recognised throughout the year in the positive feedback received about individuals and the services they provide and, in the recognition / awards received by the Service. A number of staff have celebrated long service milestones with others due to do so in the coming months.
- 2.7** It is pleasing to see that despite the wider recruitment difficulties, the Service has welcomed into permanent posts a number of now fully qualified staff who previously worked with us on COVID enforcement and other part time roles while Environmental Health degree students. However, in the early part of 2022-23, the Service suffered the devastating loss of two members of staff, both highly regarded Environmental Health professionals, who died in service after periods of illness. Needless to say, the impact on colleagues across the Service has been profound, on both a personal and a professional level.
- 2.8** The year saw a number of SRS staff beginning, continuing and completing further study, and in the coming year, additional opportunities will be identified and uptake encouraged through the performance review process.
- 2.9** Overall sickness absence levels for 2022/23 were **10.47 days per FTE person**. This represents a slight increase on the same measure for 2021/22 when the overall sickness absence rate stood at **10.11 days per FTE person**. Once again, it is the number of days lost through long term absence that has impacted the overall rate of absence, and through the year, the Service has had a number of staff away for a significant period of time. As can be seen in **Figure 1** below, the figures for 2022/23 appear to represent a return to pre-pandemic levels of sickness absence.

Figure 1: 2022/23 sickness absence figures compared to those for previous years

Year	Short term days lost per FTE	Long term days lost per FTE	Total days lost per FTE
2022/23	2.78	7.69	10.47
2021/22	1.95	8.16	10.11
2020/21	1.68	4.64	6.32
2019/20	3.04	7.19	10.23

Operational Performance

2.10 Operational performance throughout 2022/23 has been reported both to the Joint Committee and to each partner Council through the legacy systems. Written as we emerged from the pandemic, the 2022/23 Business Plan was realistic in identifying resource pressures and the uncertainty at that time over any resurgence in the pandemic through new variants. As a result, performance against the 2022/23 Business Plan is very positive, with all statutory documents published on time and the targets and actions identified in the plan were in the main achieved. Those actions that weren't attained (through lack of resource or for reasons outside the control of the Service) are being rolled over into the 2023/24 Business Plan. The following paragraphs reference the key performance criteria.

2.11 The Shared Regulatory Service has a role in delivering on Public Accountability Measures in respect of food establishments (PAM 023) for all three partner Councils, and also for empty homes (PAM 013 and PAM 045) for Cardiff and Bridgend.

- **PAM 023: Food establishments - broadly compliant (%)**

This measure provides an indication of how well a food business complies with food hygiene legislation. The food industry is responsible for producing and distributing safe food. The Shared Regulatory Service, as the enforcement agency, conducts inspections, ensuring that standards are met through a robust enforcement programme to deal with those who do not comply with standards. Additionally, the business support and advice regimes introduced into the SRS structure play a part in promoting an increase in hygiene standards, examples of that are set out under the priority heading 'supporting the local economy'. Premises are deemed to be broadly compliant if specified risk scores are achieved for cleanliness, structural issues, and confidence in the management of the business.

The proportion of premises that are broadly compliant with food hygiene requirements, i.e., scoring a 3* food hygiene rating or above, is in line with the UK average of 95%, and is consistent with that seen in previous years for each of the local authority areas, as shown in **Figure 2** below i.e.

Figure 2: Percentage of food establishments 'broadly compliant'

Year	Bridgend	Cardiff	Vale of Glamorgan
2022/23	98.00%	95.67%	97.01%
2021/22	97.38%	95.74%	97.25%
2020/21	97.24%	95.41%	97.53%
2019/20	97.49%	94.84%	97.37%

The significant turnover of food businesses has continued, and during 2022-23, some 885 new food businesses were due for inspection across the region. All new food businesses are required to be inspected and the Food Law Code of Practice requires that where possible, they are inspected within 28 days of opening. This requirement places a significant impact on the resources of the Shared Service as these visits are in addition to the existing programme of inspections. The problem is further exacerbated when new businesses are found to have poor levels of compliance, requiring further intervention.

- **PAM 013 and PAM 045**

PAM 013 measures the *percentage of empty private properties brought back into use*, while PAM 045 measures *the number of new homes created as a result of bringing empty properties back into use*. These indicators have as their core purpose the aim of indicating the reduction in the number of empty properties as a consequence of action by the Councils. The current performance measure guidance sets out the categories of direct action that local authorities can take to bring a property back into use, including

- Grants, loans or other financial assistance
- Enforcement action including statutory notices, and
- Dialogue between the owner and the local authority where progress to restore the use of the property is evident.

Officers from the Shared Regulatory Service contribute a dedicated resource to bringing empty properties back into beneficial use within Cardiff and Bridgend.

In **Bridgend** SRS is currently working on 121 active residential cases and 6 commercial cases of empty properties. Resources are targeted towards the top 20 worst cases. Of the top 20 properties, 3 are now occupied, 2 are sold and undergoing renovation, 1 property is up for sale, and another 2 are progressing through probate to be sold at the earliest opportunity. There are 6 properties subject to ongoing enforcement action, all of these being subject to enforcement notices (of these there have been 2 successful prosecutions, one work in default completed and further work pending, one pending Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) and one pending prosecution). Work also continues on properties outside the top 20 utilising the 5 stage escalation letter process. We have also established links with a registered social landlord to explore opportunities to work closer together in bringing properties back into use.

In **Cardiff**, through a combination of dialogue, incentives and enforcement action, 91 empty properties were returned to use in 2022/23. Welsh Government approved Cardiff Council's Empty Homes action plan, which identifies 13 long term derelict problem empty properties as top targets and progress is being made on several of these key targets. In addition to the day to day work to support and advise owners of empty properties the Empty Homes Working group, chaired by the Cabinet member for Housing & Communities has helped to secure effective working across all empty

homes disciplines. SRS also held a workshop with Council Housing officers to ensure the best package of measures is offered to empty property owners, in the most attractive and timely way possible which will include property loans, leasing scheme and buy back/purchase where appropriate.

From 1st April 2023, each of the three partner Councils will charge a 100% Council Tax premium on long term empty homes to help fund this work. In addition, the Vale of Glamorgan Council will provide additional resource to the Service, enabling SRS to deliver empty homes intervention and enforcement on the same footing as for Bridgend and Cardiff Councils.

2.12 The detail of performance against all the agreed performance indicators is set out in **Appendix 1**. The transition from COVID response to ‘business as usual’ meant that again, our traditional inspection programme was to some extent impacted in 2022/23. Specifically in relation to the Food inspection programme, the Service continued to follow the Food Standards Agency’s COVID-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan which recognised the significant pressure faced by local authorities (given the secondment of key members of staff to COVID response roles over a period of more than two years). The purpose of the Recovery Plan (shown in **Figure 3** below) was to provide a risk-based pathway towards resumption of planned interventions, in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice, while dealing with the COVID-related inspection backlogs that inevitably built up in the system.

Figure 3: FSA COVID-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan



Progress against the FSA COVID-19 Recovery Plan has been reported to the Joint Committee throughout the year, and it was confirmed in February 2023 that the Recovery Plan would be withdrawn at the end of the 2022/23 financial year. The Service met with the FSA in March 2023 to agree a bespoke solution for bridging the gap between the Recovery Plan and resumption of the full SRS Food programmes.

Further detail on food hygiene and food standards interventions is provided in 2.19 below.

- 2.13** The SRS may, through the relevant participant Council, prosecute breaches of legislation, particularly in respect of those who flout the law or who act irresponsibly, or where there is an immediate risk to health and safety. In the period, the service has been successful in challenging a range of unfair practices, many of which attracted media attention. The time and work required to investigate these matters, and the consequences this has on officers' ability to carry out day to day work whilst these matters are ongoing, is significant. The details of all the prosecutions that concluded in the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 are set out in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.14** SRS has continued to support relevant corporate challenges at each Council. During the 2022/23 financial year, the Shared Service brought its expertise to the table to support significant challenges as they arose. In this context, SRS Officers conducted checks on the suitability of accommodation offered by residents of the three local authorities under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. During the 2022/23 timeframe, over 500 such checks were carried out, thereby enabling Ukrainians displaced by the war to settle in suitable host accommodation across the SRS region.
- 2.15** Other examples of providing corporate support included officers playing a key role in assisting the Councils to deal with the requirements to improve air quality, and the cost of living crisis. In addition, officers provided support in dealing with the emergence of avian influenza in the wild bird population at a number of park and leisure locations. In respect of the Climate Change agenda for each Council, the Service put in place the necessary infrastructure for engagement with landlords and letting agents so that the extent to which minimum energy efficiency standards are being met in the private rented sector can be determined.
- 2.16** In respect of taxi licensing, SRS took reports to the respective Cabinets over the course of 2022/23 which led to increases in Hackney Carriage fares. In addition, SRS Officers delivered a consultation exercise for Cardiff Council in which the taxi trade and members of the public were asked for their opinions as to whether card payment facilities should be made available across the fleet, and also their views on removing the existing moratorium on the number of Hackney Carriages that can be licensed in the City.

Significant Service achievements

- 2.17** Paragraph 1.5 above highlights the priority themes for Shared Regulatory Services, and a range of achievements over the course of 2022/23 demonstrate progress toward delivering the outcomes associated with these priorities. The 2023-24 SRS Business Plan reviews these achievements in some detail, while the sections below provide just some examples of the work carried out in the last financial year.

Improving Health and Wellbeing

2.18 Improving health and wellbeing is a key priority for Shared Regulatory Services. Work undertaken to ensure that food is safe, that infectious disease, noise, and air emissions are controlled, that risks in the workplace are managed properly, allows people to live in healthy environments. Add to this our activities to ensure the quality of private rented property, the promotion of a safe trading environment and our regulation of licensed premises to ensure they operate responsibly, and it is evident that the work undertaken by SRS is hugely important to the health and wellbeing of the region.

Food Hygiene and Food Standards interventions

2.19 As outlined in paragraph 2.12 above, during 2022/23, the Shared Service followed the Food Standards Agency COVID-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan which applied across the four nations. This approach enabled resources to be targeted where they added greatest value in safeguarding public health and consumer protection, and alongside a number of essential interventions, i.e.

- Reactive work including enforcement in the case of non-compliance
- Managing food incidents and food hazards
- Investigating and managing food complaints
- Sampling, and ongoing proactive surveillance

2.20 There are certain unique challenges facing SRS in delivering on the full food hygiene and food standards programmes. These are well established and result from the sheer number of food businesses within our footprint (around 20% of all those in Wales), the diverse and vibrant nature of the food scene locally, and the very frequent churn of new business start-ups. A number of other factors have emerged, post pandemic which add to the challenges faced, namely

- The significant increase in enforcement action necessary at food premises post COVID, and the increase in the incidence of pests, all of which impacts on Officers' ability to carry out inspections and programmed work
- Many cases where previously high scoring premises under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme are scoring lower, post pandemic
- The Service has also seen a significant increase in new and different cuisines being offered at food businesses. This requires Officers to research and understand these new approaches so that through their interaction with the businesses concerned, appropriate advice can be given, and action taken as required.

2.21 Taking into account all of the above, it has been agreed with the FSA that from 1st April 2023, the Service will work towards realigning with the provisions of the Food Law Code of Practice, using the full range of flexibilities offered by the Code. The bespoke agreement will see SRS continue its risk-based approach, tackling the inspection

backlog and moving to completion of 4* C rated premises along with high risk new businesses.

- 2.22** Reflecting the significant increase in enforcement action required at food premises, post pandemic, a total of six food prosecution cases concluded during 2022/23. Others are yet to emerge from the court process. The six concluded cases resulted in fines against the food business operators totalling £21,390 together with costs of £17,575.
- 2.23** One of the cases concluding in the 2022/23 financial year arose from food hygiene and health & safety offences committed at a restaurant in 2019. After many delays in the court process, the case finally culminated in a two week trial at Cardiff Crown Court. The court heard of the dreadful conditions found by Officers at the restaurant concerned which included pest infestation, unsafe food hygiene practices and failure to comply with an improvement notice under the Health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974.

Upon conclusion of the trial, the company, its Director and her father (who managed the restaurant) were each found guilty of nine charges. In sentencing, the Judge stated that when the premises was inspected in 2019, there was clear evidence of the ingress of rats, disrepair, food handling practices that were nauseating, records that had been falsified by one or more persons, equipment that was missing or broken or which staff did not know how to use, food stored in a manner which rendered it unfit for human consumption, and where there was clearly no appetite of those running the restaurant to do anything other than trade. The three defendants were given fines totalling £14,500 and ordered to pay costs totalling £10,000 (full details are included in **Appendix 2**)

Building Safety

- 2.24** Welsh Government has repeated its commitment to addressing building safety in Wales. The vision is to take forward the Welsh Building Safety Programme alongside a significant programme of reform to establish a fit for purpose building safety regime. SRS represents the Directors of Public Protection Wales group on the Building Safety Stakeholder Group which acts as a strategic, independent advisory group for Welsh Government on matters relating to the Welsh Building Safety Programme. The first meeting of the Strategic Stakeholder Group took place in January 2023.
- 2.25** A number of different themes are being taken forward and this includes working with developers of buildings requiring remediation through the Welsh Government Developers Pact. Welsh Government has made it clear that it does not expect leaseholders to bear the cost of repairing fire safety issues that are not of their making and eleven of the major developers have made a public commitment to address fire safety issues in buildings of 11 metres and over which they have developed over the last 30 years. Welsh Government continues to develop the Leaseholder support fund for those leaseholders who face financial hardship as a result of fire safety issues in their homes and are also planning further resident engagement on the various measures being developed.

2.26 In addition to the above, SRS is represented on the Leaseholder Task and Finish Group which is examining options to help support leaseholders who find themselves in significant financial hardship. Welsh Government is considering options to introduce a scheme to target provision where it is most needed, i.e., those buildings with identified defects where individual leaseholders cannot sell their properties on the open market and find themselves in considerable difficulty due to escalating costs.

Protecting the Environment

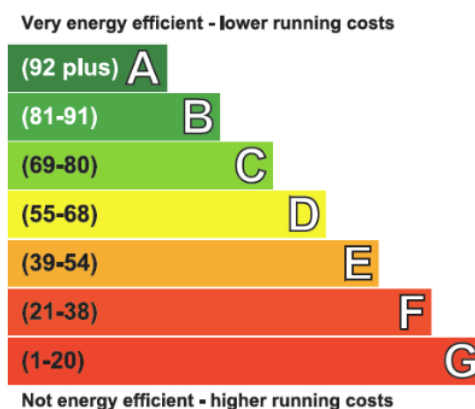
2.27 Protecting the environment is a core strategic priority of SRS. Many of the activities such as water sampling, monitoring air quality, and remediating contaminated land contribute toward promoting a better environment. This in turn means better long term prospects for the health and wellbeing of our communities. The SRS has a key role to play in ensuring society makes best use of existing resources and bringing back redundant/derelict properties into use is an important contributor to local communities as well as the wider environment. In respect of the climate change and future generations agendas SRS is able to contribute through its enforcement role on energy efficiency controls in respect of properties and consumer products. In the shorter term, SRS ensures that communities are protected from nuisance and are safer, by investigating noise complaints, and dealing with straying dogs and other animals.

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

2.28 In 2018, the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 introduced minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) for domestic private rented properties. The regulations were designed to increase the energy efficiency of the worst performing dwellings, reduce fuel poverty, and improve housing standards.

2.29 An Energy Performance Certificate has been a legal requirement for all UK homes being rented for over a decade. Certificates are valid for 10 years and through calculation of the energy efficiency score for a given property, they provide a rating from A (most efficient) to G (inefficient), as shown in Figure 4, below.

Figure 4: Energy Performance Score Rating of Properties



- 2.30** The Regulations require that domestic property let out under all new *and existing* tenancies must have an EPC rating of E or above. F or G rated properties cannot be let unless there is a bona fide, properly registered, exemption.
- 2.31** During 2022/23, the Service developed the necessary materials for a targeted program of work to contact the owners, agents and landlords of private rented properties to remind them of their duties under the legislation and to signpost to opportunities for funding streams that may be available to assist in improving the rating of their property. Interventions will be focussed initially on those properties appearing to fall into the forbidden F and G energy efficiency ratings, together with those for which there is no published rating.
- 2.32** SRS will report key data into the partner Councils, demonstrating the impact of this new area of work, both in terms of climate change but also crucially on the cost of living crisis, i.e.
- Reduction in carbon tonnage
 - Reduction in energy use at improved properties in kWh
 - Reduction in energy use at improved properties in money saved on energy bills

Animal Welfare

- 2.33** During the year, a prolific local keeper of horses was further prosecuted under the Animal Welfare Act for the mistreatment of horses and dogs, and for breaching his lifetime ban on keeping any animals. He was jailed for 6 months. This followed his earlier 6 month sentence after being found guilty of a string of animal welfare offences in 2021. In the most recent investigation, the defendant's 17 year old son also admitted 25 animal welfare charges and was disqualified from keeping animals for a period of 5 years. The court heard how, after the 2021 prosecution case, the defendant had transferred ownership of all his horses and other animals to the son, who was just 16 years old at the time. Officers of the Shared Service made every attempt to assist the son in keeping the animals responsibly, but to no avail. Detailed improvement notices concerning the unsuitability of the environment, overcrowding, inability to display normal behaviours and the provision of adequate food and water, had been consistently ignored.
- 2.34** Complaints and other intelligence continue to be received on illegal, unlicensed dog breeding. Unfortunately, this is an industry that has attracted a rogue element, keen to make quick profits, with little thought for animal welfare, and in an environment where they perceive there to be a low risk of being caught and punished. The Service is determined to take a firm line against illegal breeding to protect not only unsuspecting purchasers, but to safeguard the welfare of dogs and their puppies, and at the same time create a 'level playing field' for legitimate, properly licensed breeders.

- 2.35** SRS Officers have carried out a number of major investigations into illegal dog breeding over the course of 2022/23, and while no prosecution cases have concluded in court over that particular time frame, several are in the court system currently. A continuing theme to emerge from these investigations is the exploitation of the narrow definition of dog breeding that requires a licence. Other activities, often inextricably linked with dog breeding fall outside the current requirement to be licensed. Examples include the sale and supply of semen, the provision of stud dogs, artificial insemination, and other fertility services. In responding to a January 2023 Welsh Government consultation on animal related licensing, SRS made the case for these allied activities, provided to clients at significant cost, to be regulated as part of a wider licensing requirement.
- 2.36** During 2022/23, SRS contributed to two TV documentaries highlighting the often dark world of dog breeding and the harms that can be caused by it. The first of these was the BBC Panorama programme '*Dogs, Dealers and Organised Crime*' which featured an investigation reported to Joint Committee in 2021/22, when a Vale of Glamorgan couple were prosecuted for animal welfare offences (including the overbreeding of bitches). The case resulted in them both being fined £19,000 and ordered to pay costs totalling £44,000. The second documentary was an episode of '*Defenders UK*' which featured an SRS investigation into an illegal dog breeder based in Cardiff (again, reported previously to Joint Committee). In that case, American Bully puppies were sold through Facebook, and the investigation uncovered offences of animal mutilation, causing unnecessary suffering to an animal and the illegal importation of dogs. The breeder was sentenced to 16 weeks in custody, fined £1200 and ordered to pay costs of £9775. He was also banned from keeping animals for 8 years.
- 2.37** In 2022, our Animal Health and Welfare Team was recognised under the RSPCA PawPrint Awards Scheme for their work in animal related licensing, stray dog provision and kennelling. It was particularly pleasing to see that for the first time the Service, achieved the gold standard for animal related licensing, not only improving on previous performance in this category, but becoming the only service in Wales to achieve the gold standard in animal licensing. A further gold award was received for stray dog provision and a bronze award for kennelling.

Air Quality

- 2.38** During 2022/23, SRS ensured that Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Councils met their statutory duties under part 4 of the Environment Act 1995 by producing the 2022 Annual Progress Report (APR) for each area. These reports detailed their quality monitoring data for 2021 and were reported to the three respective Cabinets.
- 2.39** In **Bridgend**, the 2022 APR highlighted continued non-compliance of the annual average air quality objective in 2021 for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) with concentrations of 46 µg/m³ being recorded at two locations within the Park Street Air Quality

Management Area (AQMA). The APR demonstrated that all other monitoring locations within Bridgend County Borough continued to meet the relevant air quality objectives.

- 2.40** SRS in conjunction with colleagues from BCBC Communications Team undertook a 12-week consultation on the updated Park Street AQMA Action Plan. This ran from the 29th of August until the 21st of November 2022. The purpose of the consultation was to seek the views of the residents, businesses and other interested parties on the proposed measures set out to reduce NO₂ concentrations on Park Street. The results of the public consultation were positive and in general supportive of the key priority areas of intervention and air quality actions developed in the AQAP.
- 2.41** The draft AQAP has been updated following the consultation and from technical feedback from Welsh Government. A final AQAP will be taken to Bridgend CBC Cabinet for approval prior to being submitted to Welsh Government.
- 2.42** In **Cardiff**, the 2022 APR highlighted that in 2021 no monitoring sites recorded concentrations in exceedance of the annual average objective set for NO₂ of 40 µg/m³. The results were indicative of the continued impacts of the COVID lockdowns and restrictions at the start of 2021 on pollution levels in Cardiff. Overall it appears that traffic volumes have decreased by approximately 20% to pre-covid levels, which continues to have a positive impact on overall air quality in Cardiff. SRS continues to support the delivery of the Cardiff Council Clean Air Plan in line with the additional Legal Direction from Welsh Government. Further detailed transportation and air quality modelling work was progressed during Quarter 3, the results of which will enable Cardiff to identify a permanent scheme for Castle Street, which was due to be reported.
- 2.43** In the **Vale of Glamorgan**, the 2022 APR demonstrated that no monitoring sites recorded concentrations in exceedance of the annual average objective set for NO₂ of 40 µg/m³. Monitoring within the previously declared Windsor Road Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) showed continued compliance concerning the applicable air quality objectives for NO₂.

Safeguarding the Vulnerable

- 2.44** SRS contributes toward the safeguarding agendas of the partner Councils by seeking to ensure that children are protected from harmful substances and products, that older and vulnerable people are protected from unscrupulous individuals and traders, that illegal money lending activities across Wales are challenged robustly, and that the public feel safe when using taxis as public transport.
- 2.45** During 2022/23, SRS received 196 complaints or intelligence logs regarding **underage sales** of alcohol, e-cigarettes, tobacco and knives. With the assistance of young volunteers, Officers responded by staging a total of 60 attempts to purchase a range of age restricted products during the year. 13 of these attempts to purchase resulted

in a sale (22%) of either alcohol or e-cigarettes/vapes. The circumstances of each case were fully investigated, and appropriate enforcement action taken.

2.46 Details of the underage sales cases successfully prosecuted in 2022/23 are included in **Appendix 2** to this report, but one, involving the sale of alcohol stands out as being particularly egregious. In this case, two volunteers, one aged 15 and the other 16 entered a local store and took a box of dark fruit cider, priced at £12.99 to the counter. On attempting to purchase the alcohol, the 15 year old volunteer was asked their age by the business owner. When the volunteer answered truthfully that they were only 15, the shopkeeper explained that someone would have to be 18 to buy alcohol. Rather than refusing the sale, however, the business owner proceeded to charge the volunteer for the box of cider, adding an additional £1.01 to the purchase price. He indicated for the volunteer to meet him at the door, where he handed over the cans of cider him, no longer in their box, but decanted into two opaque carrier bags.

The shopkeeper claimed to be the Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS) for the store, but this wasn't the case. He had supplied false personal licence holder details to the Licensing Department (as he did not hold a personal licence) and as a result, the store had been trading without having a DPS in place. The business owner was fined £640 for selling alcohol to a person under the age of 18, £640 for not having a Designated Premises Supervisor and £640 for supplying false information. He was also ordered to pay costs of £500 and a victim surcharge of £190 making a total of £2,610.

2.47 During 2022/23, Officers investigated a number of significant rogue builder or doorstep crime cases. Sitting behind each of these cases is a story of residents, often vulnerable, being defrauded of large sums of money, sometimes their life savings. The cases show a pattern of little, or no, work being done, and where work has been carried out, it will have been to a very poor standard. While multiple cases have progressed into the court process to be prosecuted, the legacy of COVID-related delays in the court system meant that relatively few cases finally concluded in court during the year. Nevertheless, the impact of these three concluded cases is significant, i.e.

- A combined total of nearly 3 years in custodial sentences
- A 12-month Community Order
- 150 hours of unpaid work
- Costs of £750, and
- Compensation of £6000 for some of those affected.

2.48 Hosted by SRS, the Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit (WIMLU) covers the length and breadth of Wales. It works closely with other public agencies, including housing providers and third sector organisations whose position on the 'front line' means that they encounter the victims of loan sharks through their daily activities. These relationships provide the Unit with crucial intelligence of illegal lending. To exploit this and encourage reporting, WIMLU proactively seeks opportunities to present to these organisations on the work of the team and receives frequent requests for information and training of frontline staff and community-based public facing support services. In 2022/23 training was delivered to 46 different organisations from all over Wales

drawn from different aspects of local government, credit unions, and the housing, advice and charitable sectors. Some 895 participants were reached in this way, representing a 36% increase on the number trained during 2021/22.

- 2.49** In October 2022, the public face of the Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit was rebranded as 'Stop Loan Sharks Wales'. The rebranding was promoted with a four week media campaign and the creation of a social media digital toolkit for stakeholders. The social media campaign ran across the major social media platforms. In addition, the unit undertook local targeted action in areas of Wales based on recent intelligence of illegal lending activity, with additional awareness raising in the form of digi-vans (which use advertising screens on the sides of the vehicle), driving on specific routes with scheduled stops including supermarkets and town centre locations.
- 2.50** As part of the WIMLU rebranding, a new dedicated website was launched at <https://stoploansharkswales.co.uk/>. This new website provides a range of information and resources/ training around illegal money lending. The aim is to ensure that these key messages are at the forefront of the minds of partners, and as a result this will help the Unit expand its reach and share messages with victims, support groups and members of the public throughout Wales so that more people know about illegal money lending, its dangers and how to report it.

Supporting the Local economy

- 2.51** The work of SRS has a significant impact upon the local economy in a number of different ways. The provision of timely advice and guidance on regulation can enable businesses to maximise the benefit they derive from the marketplace, and the taking of firm enforcement action against rogue traders and those undermining the *bona fide* trade maintains an environment in which legitimate businesses are able to flourish. At the same time, effective market surveillance ensures 'visibility' of trading practices that would otherwise be hidden, and this is particularly so in regard to the huge increase in online trading in recent years. The SRS role as regulator also extends to providing a fair trading environment for consumers, supporting them to become better informed and confident in their purchasing decisions.
- 2.52** The Primary Authority scheme enables a business to enter into a statutory partnership with a local authority through which it can receive assured advice. Provided this advice is followed, the Primary Authority (PA) is able to challenge intended enforcement action by other local authorities. Over the course of 2022/23, SRS has increased its Primary Authority portfolio from 28 to 34 partnerships which includes both local and national businesses and is able to charge for the work done as part of these arrangements on the basis of full cost recovery. In addition, arrangements with one of the Service's high-profile partners changed during the year, meaning that SRS is now responsible not just for food hygiene matters in Wales, but for the co-ordination of all referrals about that business, from other local authorities in England and Wales.

- 2.53** Illegal tobacco (i.e., counterfeit, or non-duty paid) continues to present a very real problem in our communities. Research has shown that at least 15% of all tobacco and cigarettes supplied in Wales are illegal, and smokers are quite comfortable in purchasing it, presumably under the misapprehension that the only impact of its widespread use is the loss of revenue to HM Treasury. This thinking ignores the most serious harms caused by illegal tobacco. At around half the cost of legitimate product, illegal tobacco removes the price incentive for smokers to quit the otherwise expensive habit. In addition, the way in which illegal tobacco is supplied means that mainstream tobacco control measures such as minimum age of purchase and the tobacco display ban are undermined. It is also important to remember that widespread availability of illegal tobacco undermines the viability of legitimate retailers selling genuine product, for it is not just the revenue from tobacco products that they are losing. Customers purchasing (illegal) tobacco elsewhere will also tend to purchase other goods elsewhere, for example the bread, milk and other essentials they pick up at the same time as their cigarettes.
- 2.54** SRS officers carry out regular exercises with partner agencies and the assistance of tobacco detection dogs to locate illegal product (which invariably will be hidden) whilst on site. During 2022/23, some 32 seizures of illegal tobacco were made from vehicles and residential properties as well as from retail premises. **13,834 packets of cigarettes** and **957 packets of hand rolling tobacco** were seized during these operations with a total retail value estimated to be **£184,501**.
- 2.55** During 2022/23 SRS Officers investigated the supply of a range of other counterfeit goods, the supply of which impacts the viability of legitimate traders who sell genuine items. Examples of the types of counterfeit goods seized during 2022/23 include
- Counterfeit chocolate bars
 - Counterfeit Apple products
 - Counterfeit dog clothes and leads (bearing Chanel and Dior trademarks)
 - Counterfeit vapes
- 2.56** Building on the success of the 'Ask the Regulator' series of podcasts, SRS prepared a further six episodes over the course of 2022/23. Produced by local community radio station Bro Radio, the podcasts can be accessed via the SRS website and are also available on Spotify. The most recent episodes cover the following topics:
- Business Focus (May 2022)
 - Penarth Food Pod and Jubilee Celebrations (June 2022)
 - The 'Buy with Confidence' scheme (September 2022)
 - National Safeguarding Week (November 2022)
 - Illegal Money Lending (January 2023)
 - Mandatory Licensing of Special Procedures in Wales (March 2023)

Such has been the success of the podcasts that they were nominated at the National Community Radio Awards for 2022 in the category for best podcast.

Maximising the use of resources

- 2.57** Maximising the use of resources was the original catalyst for creating SRS, and work in this area continues. By reducing “triplication” of effort, introducing better processes, making systems work without constant intervention and improving access into the service, our business improves and customer satisfaction increases. Income generating activities like marketing our metrology laboratory, offering paid for advice services, building Primary Authority partnerships and extending our training provision to business are examples of our more “commercial” culture.
- 2.58** Further improvements to the **SRS website** have taken place over the last year in order to ensure the best possible customer journey. During 2022/23, the SRS website had 52,665 users and 141,142 page views. Our noise and air pollution web pages continue to receive the most page views of all areas.
- 2.59** The SRS website is supplemented by our **social media** offerings, SRS Twitter (@SRS_Wales) and the SRS LinkedIn account. These channels have proved to be a highly effective way of getting information to a large number of businesses and residents.
- 2.60** The Service encourages use of the **noise app** in cases where residents wish to make a complaint about noise. It can be downloaded simply from the App Store enabling them to short bursts of the disturbance to be recorded and submitted to the case Officer to determine if a nuisance has occurred. This approach has enabled complaints to be triaged effectively, thereby ensuring that officers’ site visits are prioritised where and when they are most needed.
- 2.61** Since the inception of SRS, officers have been provided with access to the systems of the 3 legacy authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. This enables officers to access the essential IT systems they need to fulfil their duties for the relevant authorities. While this has worked well, more recent updates to systems and software have impacted on the continuity of current arrangements affecting connectivity and access. SRS maintains good relationships with the ICT departments of the legacy authorities to deal with issues as they arise in the short term. It has become apparent however, that there is a need to consolidate the long-term access requirements to ensure continued access and smooth running of systems and crucially to provide seamless delivery of essential services.
- 2.62** The different ways of working during the pandemic impacted the ability of the Service to generate income and recover costs over that time frame. In the case of business training courses for example, restrictions on movement and gathering meant that teaching in a classroom setting was simply not possible, and so training provision had to be paused while online solutions were developed. In the second half of 2022/23, SRS became the first training provider in Wales to deliver the Level 2 qualification in Infection Prevention and Control for special procedure practitioners. All practitioners in Wales performing tattooing, acupuncture, skin piercing, and electrolysis will have to obtain this qualification as part of the requirements of the new Welsh Government

Special Procedures regime. By year end, the Service saw a return to pre-pandemic levels of income through the provision of training, as a result of our Primary Authority work, our paid for business advice, the work of the UKAS accredited metrology laboratory and our specialist environmental monitoring services.

Financial Performance

- 2.63** The 2022/23 Shared Regulatory Services Gross Revenue Budget was approved on the 14th December 2021.
- 2.64** Two members of staff remained on secondments out of the Service during the year. The associated cost of these secondments was being recovered from Welsh Government and Monmouthshire County Council. This has then enabled staff to act up into more senior roles.
- 2.65** A small group of officers from across the Service were seconded to support the regional Trace, Track and Process (TTP) teams to both Health Boards that cover the SRS region. From July 2022, this was reduced to supporting the Cardiff and Vale Health Board only.
- 2.66** The impact of cost pressures relating to cost-of-living price rises has intensified pressure on already struggling budgets.
- 2.67** The Gross Revenue Budget and unaudited outturn position for 2022/23 are shown in the tables below, with the position in respect of each of the partners detailed to include both Authority Specific and Core expenditure positions. The Service achieved an unaudited £63k overspend against a gross revenue budget of £8.331m, as illustrated in the following table:

	Gross Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance
Authority	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	1,777	1,703	74
Cardiff	4,811	4,936	(125)
Vale	1,743	1,755	(12)
Total Gross Expenditure	8,331	8,394	(63)

- 2.68** Multiple recruitment drives were undertaken during the 2022/23, however, the Service experienced significant issues in attracting appropriate candidates to particular disciplines within the Service, which may also be due to a national scarcity of resource being available. This position was then amplified further due to the cost-of-living price rises and the overall position of the economy.
- 2.69** Throughout 2022/23, the Service worked with local universities in the practical support of students who are enrolled on degree courses relevant to areas in the SRS

such as supporting the Homes for Ukraine initiative within the Housing Team. Some of the students then went on to secure permanent posts within the Service as vacancies arose.

2.70 Staff have continued to work from home, with only skeleton staffing levels at the hubs.

2.71 A full breakdown of the unaudited outturn position is shown in **Appendix 3**.

Authority Specific Services

2.72 The approved gross budget of £2.414m in respect of Authority Specific (AS) Services has a unaudited outturn overspend of £222k, as detailed in the following table:

	Gross Budget	Outturn Position	Outturn Variance
Authority	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	434	396	38
Cardiff	1,468	1,683	(215)
Vale	512	557	(45)
Total AS Services	2,414	2,636	(222)

2.73 The £38k underspend at Bridgend, relates directly to a £22k underspend within Kennelling and Vets which is very much consistent to activity levels experienced in previous years. The £13k underspend within Licensing as a result of carrying a part year vacant post, plus £3k underspend on Bridgend Empty Homes due to in year staffing changes.

2.74 The £215k overspend at Cardiff predominantly relates to the £196k overspend within Taxi Licensing Section which is consistent with performance in previous years.

2.75 Night Time Noise achieved an overspend of £14k, which is due to a marginal uplift in demand due to an increase in service expectations plus the salary award being in excess of budget.

2.76 The £4k overspend in Cardiff Port Health Authority is due to the pay award exceeding the budgeted expectation.

2.77 The combined £3k overspend within HMO Cathays and Plasnewydd is the result of increased salary costs resulting from the pay award, which was then partially offset by a small underspend elsewhere on these budgets.

2.78 Student Liaison achieved a £2k underspend, due to a change in staff.

2.79 Overall the Vale achieved an aggregate £45k overspend.

- 2.80** Taxi Licensing achieved an overspend of £50k which is as a result of increased staffing costs to enable staff to successfully navigate an increased workload.
- 2.81** Burials achieved an £8k overspend which is due to an escalation in demand during the current economic climate. The £1k overspend within Pest Control relates to the impact of the agreed pay award, which was marginally offset by underspends across the remaining budget.
- 2.82** The £14k underspend within Kennelling and Vets, is consistent with performance in previous periods.

Core Services

- 2.83** The approved gross Core Services Budget for 2022/23 is £5.917m, which at year end has achieved an unaudited underspend of £159k at year end. The Core Service's budget is allocated in line with the population split across the participating authorities, as illustrated in the following table:

Authority	%	Gross	Forecast	Outturn
		Budget	Outturn	Variance
		£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	22.70%	1,343	1,307	36
Cardiff	56.49%	3,343	3,253	90
Vale	20.81%	1,231	1,198	33
Total Core		5,917	5,758	159

- 2.84** The £158k overspend within Animal Services is the result of a vehicle purchase plus increased vets and legal costs being incurred due to a large canine seizure undertaken on welfare grounds by the Service. Additionally, there were residual legal, stabling and vet's fees incurred in the early part of 2022/23 in respect of the previous year's equine seizure which have also contributed to the outturn position.
- 2.85** Environmental Services achieved a balanced position at year end.
- 2.86** The £18k underspend within Food is the result of in year vacancies where recruitment campaigns did not attract a sufficient volume of appropriate candidates. Agency has been accessed to address this issue.
- 2.87** Housing Services has achieved a £9k underspend outturn position, which is the result of vacant posts.
- 2.88** Health & Safety and Communicable Disease Services has achieved an £62k outturn overspend which predominantly relates to the impact of the recently agreed 2022/23 pay award, plus additional officer time being undertaken to meet increased pressures on the Service.

- 2.89** Pollution Services has achieved a underspend of £64k, which is the result of the impact of the pay award, which has being partially offset by in year vacant posts.
- 2.90** The £288k Trading Standards underspend relates to a number of vacant posts together with an underspend within Supplies & Services.

Challenges moving forward

2.91 Since its inception, SRS has consolidated service delivery in accord with the agreed standards. The over-riding challenges during 2023/24 will be around recruitment and retention, tackling post-pandemic backlogs in programmed work, the need to address emerging global, national, regional, and local events, and all while working within a reduced resource. Consequently, the Key Milestones for 2023/24 include:

- *Delivery of the SRS Business Plan 2023-2024 and the associated corporate priorities assigned to the SRS by the partner Councils*
- *To support the partner Councils and other agencies as an integral part of the health protection system in Wales*
- *To monitor the implementation of new legislation and any requirements imposed by such legislation upon the Service, for example the Welsh Government requirements around Special Procedures and Single Use Plastics*
- *To contribute to the climate change goals in each of the partner authorities through effective enforcement of environmental controls such as those regulating energy efficiency in the private rented housing sector.*
- *To consult with staff and develop a recruitment and retention strategy comprising actions for the short, medium and longer term in order to attract, develop and retain skilled staff.*
- *Review the agile working arrangements for the service to ensure that technology is being exploited fully to improve service delivery.*

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

3.1 The Annual report demonstrates the partner Councils' commitment to improving social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being and promoting sustainable development in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Equalities, Sustainability and safeguarding issues have all been taken into account when drafting this plan. Our work with stakeholders seeking to ensure that our early

intervention and prevention activities maintain wellbeing in the SRS region is a crucial element of our approach to protect local people and the environment.

- 3.2 The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act requires the SRS to underpin decision making by contributing to the seven well-being goals of the Act, following the five ways of working, and consequently undertaking actions that will have a positive impact on people living in the future as well as those living today. The SRS Business Plan contains a number of initiatives that contribute to the wellbeing objectives. Section 6 of the Business Plan illustrates how the SRS priorities interface with the wellbeing goals on matters such as safeguarding the vulnerable and protecting the environment and forms the basis for the Annual report.
- 3.3 Aligning the Wellbeing Goals of the Act enables us to evidence our contribution to the National Wellbeing Goals. Promoting the five ways of working is reflected in our approach to integrated business planning. Setting consistently challenging yet realistic steps and performance improvement targets, the SRS is able to clearly demonstrate progress towards achieving the national goals by the production of the Annual report.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1 One of the key strategic themes for the Shared Regulatory Service is *Protecting the Local Environment*.
- 4.2 The SRS Business Plan articulates the work carried out under this theme to deliver on the corporate priorities for the participant Councils, including their ambitions to minimise climate change and impacts on the natural environment.
- 4.3 In this context, the Joint Committee is regularly updated on the contribution of the Shared Service to this agenda, for example through its work in the areas of animal health and welfare, air quality, contaminated land, energy efficiency in the private rented sector and investigating greenwashing claims or environmental fraud.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1 The implications are set out in the body of the report.

Employment

- 5.2 The implications are set out in the body of the report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3** The partner Councils have a duty to improve under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. The report outlines achievements in 2022/23 for the matters assigned to the Shared Regulatory Service. The Joint Working Agreement executed on 10 April 2015 and amended July 2017 sets out the obligations placed upon the partner Councils in delivery of the Shared Regulatory Service.

6. Background Papers

None

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – SRS Performance Measures 2022- 2023
- Appendix 2 – SRS Prosecution Statistics 2022-2023
- Appendix 3 – 2022-2023 SRS Provisional Outturn Position