

AGENDA ITEM: 7

SUMMARY



Report for:	Housing and Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	12th September 2012
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Quarter One Performance Report – Regulatory Services
Contact:	CLlr Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services Author/Responsible Officers: Steven Baker, Assistant Director (Legal, Democratic & Regulatory) Rita McGinlay, Group Manager (Regulatory Services)
Purpose of report:	To provide Members with the performance report for quarter 1 in relation to Regulatory Services.
Recommendations:	That Members note the report.
Corporate objectives:	Resources and Value For Money; Optimise Resources and Implement Best Practice.
Implications:	Financial: None.
'Value For Money Implications'	Value for Money: Monitoring Performance supports the Council in achieving Value for Money for its citizens.
Risk Implications	Risk Assessment completed for each service area as part of service planning and reviewed quarterly.
Equalities Implications	Equality Impact Assessment completed for each service area as part of service planning and reviewed quarterly.

Health And Safety Implications	None.
Consultees:	
Background papers:	Quarterly Performance Report – quarter 1 (attached).
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	HEEP – Herts and Essex Energy Partnership HMO – House in multiple occupation

1. Background

1.1 For the purpose of this report, 'Regulatory Services' includes the following services:

- Environmental Health (Food Safety, Health and Safety, Statutory Nuisances, Contaminated Land, Drainage, Private Water Supplies, Infectious Diseases, Air Quality Management)
- Private Sector Housing (HMOs, Illegal Eviction, Private Sector Landlord Issues, Improvement Grants, Disabled Facilities Grants, etc)
- Home Energy Conservation
- Pest Control
- Stray Dogs / Dog Warden Services
- Clinical Waste
- Cesspool Emptying
- Enviro Enforcement and High Hedges
- Emergency and Business Continuity Planning.
- Street Trading

2. Regulatory Services Performance Indicators

There are no significant performance issues to bring to Members' attention arising in quarter 1. There has been slight slippage in a couple of areas, but despite the computer terminal server issues reported at the last meeting (9th May 2012), the slippage has been less than was anticipated. In addition, resources have been temporarily diverted from the Health and Safety service to assist with enforcement action within the Food Safety service. In relation to reference REG06 – Disabled Facilities Grants – each of these non conformances have been investigated. These were largely due to circumstances outside the Council's control, for example, works were halted due to the unfortunate death of a client, or bespoke equipment had to be sourced, or a client requested that certain works did not proceed until a more convenient time.

3. Food Safety Enforcement

There have been a number of applications to the Magistrates Court for Food Condemnation Orders, to condemn unfit seized food and a food premises Prohibition Order, to close a food premises that presented a significant health risk due to a serious rat infestation. The Magistrates granted orders in all of these actions. Sentencing for a food hygiene prosecution at Crown Court was also handed down

during the quarter, with resultant fines of £50,000 (plus the Council's prosecution costs). This generated a lot of media interest locally, as well as nationally within the Environmental Health professional journals and farming journals.

4. Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

Arrangements for responding to civil contingencies and for ensuring business continuity were reviewed, with our Hertfordshire County Council partner, prior to the start of the Olympic Games. An internal audit of the service has been programmed for quarter 2.

5. Home Energy Conservation

5.1 There have been a number of changes to the Council's delivery of home energy conservation measures within private sector dwellings. The Herts Essex Energy Partnership (HEEP) scheme is coming to an end and will be succeeded by new government initiatives, including the Green Deal, Energy Company Obligation, Renewable Heat Incentive and other initiatives. A separate report on the agenda provides further information on these.

5.2 The Council joined 13 other local authorities to form HEEP. In the last three years, HEEP has spent around £390,000 in Dacorum on energy saving grants, loans and discounts to help customers save energy, money on their fuel bills and make a positive difference to the environment. The funding (which came from a central pot from the government and energy companies in the area), has gone towards installing loft, cavity wall and external wall insulation, replacing boilers over 15 years old and fitting solar panels. In total across Dacorum, it has supplied over 1,000 energy saving measures, adding to the Council's efforts to tackle climate change.

6. Private Sector Housing

Officers have noted some positive trends emerging in the private rented sector during quarter 1. There has been increased interest from managing agents on the statutory requirements for operating houses in multiple occupation, (HMOs). This is encouraging, as this sector is notoriously difficult to regulate and support from the managing agents could make a valuable contribution to ensuring the health and safety of private sector tenants. Furthermore, officers have noted a drop in complaints of illegal eviction from private rented properties. These trends will be monitored.

7. Operational Issues

Members may wish to note that Regulatory Services is now located on the second floor of the main building. The Team Leader (Operations), Dawn Rhoden, is now on maternity leave. Should Members have any queries regarding Dawn's service areas (dog warden, pest control, drainage and cesspools, or emergency planning), then either Nicholas Egerton, Emma Walker or Rita McGinlay would be able to assist.