



AGENDA ITEM: 7

SUMMARY

Report for:	Housing and Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	13/11/2013
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Quarter Two Performance Report – Regulatory Services
Contact:	<p>Cllr Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services</p> <p>Author/Responsible Officers:</p> <p>Chris Troy, Group Manager, Regulatory Services</p> <p>Dave Austin, Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Delivery)</p>
Purpose of report:	To provide Members with the performance report for quarter 2 in relation to Regulatory Services.
Recommendations:	That Members note the report.
Corporate	Resources and Value For Money;

objectives:	Optimise Resources and Implement Best Practice.
Implications: 'Value For Money Implications'	Financial: None. 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 2 (attached).
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	

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)
- Public Health
- Home Energy Conservation
- Pest Control
- Stray Dogs / Dog Warden Services
- Clinical Waste
- Cesspool Emptying
- Environmental Enforcement and High Hedges
- Emergency and Business Continuity Planning
- Street Trading
- Sustainability

2.0 Regulatory Services Performance Indicators

2.1 There has been slippage in one area:

REG01 (Red) - Percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours.

The quarter 2 performance identified that there has been significant slippage with respect to this indicator. There were just two abandoned vehicles reported to Redcorn during this quarter and one of these missed the 24 hour target. For reasons not entirely clear the removal contractor failed to act on our instructions, although the vehicles were removed within 24hours of the second notification.

3. Environmental Protection

3.1 **Statutory noise nuisance:** A number of residents living in a block of flats in Hemel Hempstead complained to the Council that a tenant regularly played amplified music at excessive levels. Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) were able to witness this noise which resulted in the serving of an abatement notice under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Despite the notice being served the noise continued and officers had no choice but to take direct action. Officers obtained a warrant from the court and broke into the flat and seized the tenant's music centre. This was a good example of partnership working with the police, who supported our intervention from the onset, and agreed to accompany officers on the day the equipment was seized.

3.2 **Fly-tipping :** Action is being considered in relation to waste illegally deposited on land in Bullbeggars Lane, Potten End . An investigation into alleged offences under the Environmental Protection Act was carried out by officers from the Enforcement section. They were able to identify the source of the waste and managed to locate a witness who identified the potential offender. A prosecution file has been submitted to the Council's legal section and we are awaiting approval to proceed.

4. Food Safety

4.1 **Closure of a food premises:** Voluntary closure procedures were initiated following an inspection of a restaurant in Markyate. A number of problems were identified including a pest infestation and a general failure to maintain standards of hygiene & cleanliness. Food Hygiene Improvement Notices were also served for breaches of food hygiene legislation in a local fish and chip shop.

4.2 **Novel food process:** An issue emerged in the last quarter relating to a business involved in novel food process, namely the processing of raw human placenta for human consumption. Action is being taken to stop this operation.

4.3 **Food Hygiene Rating System :**The Council's website has been updated and there is now a widget on the home page of the DBC website which allows the public to see all recent 4 and 5 rated premises and there is also an app which can be downloaded onto smart phones and tablets which will give instant information to users.

5. Pest control

- 5.1 There are plans in the future to expand the Council's Pest Control Service and in September we met with representatives from Hertfordshire County Council to discuss taking over the pest control contracts for 15 of their largest sites. Additional officers are being trained on pest control which will increase capacity in this area. We are also looking at other income streams including the possibility for charging for some domestic call outs.

6. Health and Safety

- 6.1 Health and Safety Enforcement notices were served on a warehouse after an inspection identified that workers were being exposed to excessive noise and dust. In addition notices were served for dangerous racking and an unprotected mezzanine floor and a fork lift truck was prohibited from being used. We are continuing to work with the business and they are now largely compliant with Health and Safety legislation.

7. Private Sector Housing

- 7.1. **Empty Homes Strategy** :The Council's Empty Homes Strategy was approved by Cabinet in September . The aim of this strategy will be to bring empty homes back into use which is a sustainable way to meet housing needs as well as improving the overall amenity of an area and reducing crime.

8. Animal Welfare

- 8.1 A woman, living in Hemel Hempstead, was successfully prosecuted under the Animal Welfare Act for prolonged neglect of a pet dog, to the extent that the dog had to be put down, The pet owner, who tried to pass her dying dog off as a stray, was fined £580 and given a suspended prison sentence alongside a ten year ban form owning a dog.
- 8.2 The Council's dog warden has achieved the Silver Footprint (RSPCA) award for animal welfare for the third year running. The attainment of this assurance scheme means the public can be confident that we are looking after their dogs when they are under our care.

9. Clinical Waste

- 9.1 Changes to the clinical waste collection in partnership with CSG, Env Agency and Hertfordshire County Council has resulted in a 30% reduction in 'over classified' waste. This will allow people that have certain ailments to keep their dignity as they will now be less readily identified, whilst maintaining the Council's duty to ensure that clinical waste is disposed of in the correct way. There were some initial complaints about the reduced service at the beginning but crucially no non-conformances have been reported to HCC.

10. Recruitment

- 10.1 Two officers have taken up their roles in Regulatory Services

Dawn Ryder (Environmental Health Officer-Environmental Protection & Housing Team)

Nicola Turvey (Sustainability Officer)

11. Public Health

- 11.1 Officers sit on Dacorum's Health and Wellbeing Group as well as the Hertfordshire Health Protection Committee. Both these groups are focused on identifying the key determinants of health within communities and looking to see how local authorities can improve health outcomes.

There is a project looking at capturing public health data from the day to day work we do and translating this into meaningful information which will help to inform and prioritise our objectives for the future. We will be considering how best to deliver the wider 'Public Health Agenda' in terms of the three key areas listed below:

- Protection from threats and hazards
- Preventing ill health
- Promotion of good health

This will involve joint working with other stakeholders within Dacorum as well as external partners such as Public Health England, Health Protection, Hertfordshire County Council and other Local Authorities within Hertfordshire.