

Regulatory Services Deputy Leader's Statement 2019/20



INTRODUCTION

East Staffordshire Borough Council has three Corporate Priorities:

- **Value for Money Council**
- **Community Regeneration**
- **Environment and Health & Wellbeing**

The following statement sets out how the Deputy Leader for Regulatory Services and officers within this portfolio area will contribute to achieving these priorities, as well highlighting key achievements from 2018/19.

However the activities outlined in the statement are often cross-cutting themes with overlaps into other areas, and throughout the statement there may be examples of joint delivery with other Executive Members as well as managers from other sections.

Each of the statements made by the individual portfolio holders will then be collated to form the basis of East Staffordshire Borough Council's Corporate Plan for 2019/20.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2018/19

Over the past 12 months, the Council has been working hard to improve its services and is currently on track to achieve 100% of this portfolio's milestones set for 2018/19 by the end of this financial year.

Some of these achievements are highlighted in the following section.

Improved Value for Money in Environmental Health Activities

This year the Council introduced a charging policy for requested Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) re-inspections and food safety advice to businesses. This means that businesses that score less than 5 under FHRS have to pay if they choose to request a re-visit for the purpose of increasing their rating. This policy now enables costs to be recovered for this discretionary service and reduces non-statutory operational costs.

In addition to this, the Council reviewed its Animal Welfare Policy ensuring that the service is cost efficient, fit for purpose and operating in line with changes in legislation. The Council also reviewed its policy in relation to the provision of Public Health Funerals, providing a cost effective service to assist the Council in undertaking its statutory responsibilities.

Brought the Disabled Facilities Grant Service 'In-house'

The Council adopted a new in-house Disabled Facilities Grant service from 1st April 2018, incorporating more efficient ways of working to secure faster and more cost efficient adaptations to enable residents to live independently in their own home. This is supported by a Disabled Facilities Grant Policy detailing a range of discretionary options alongside the mandatory grants process, encouraging clients to proactively manage their condition(s) via the uptake of support services provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services teams.

Continued Community and Civil Enforcement Activities

This year the Council has undertaken a review of its Community and Civil Enforcement activities, as the function has in practice become increasingly community based, with for example, the responsibility for on-street parking enforcement returning to Staffordshire County Council in recent years. This review has ensured that the Community and Civil Enforcement Team continue to deliver a robust and efficient service, in response to the changing needs of our communities. In addition to this, the team has delivered a series of initiatives across the Borough aimed at educating residents on issues such as waste and fly tipping, amongst others.

Improvements in Licensing Activities

This year the Council has reviewed its Gambling Act Policy to ensure it continues to be fit for purpose. In addition, the Council also reviewed its Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Policy, which specifies the requirements for an operator's licence. The Council also completed a review of its nominated Testing Stations. Licensed vehicles attend these stations in order to receive their Certificate of Compliance, ensuring that they are of the necessary standard and that our Testing Stations offer value for money as well as the relevant standards of service. Numerous premises have expressed an interest in operating as an Approved Testing Station.

Continued Enforcement Activities

Over the last 12 months the Council has reviewed its High Hedge complaint procedures and the associated fees to ensure they continue to be efficient and effective. The team has undertaken several proactive, intelligence-led initiatives with partnership agencies and has worked alongside other Council departments, including the Community and Civil Enforcement and Waste Management Teams to address issues, including fly-tipping, within the Borough.

Continued Delivery and Evaluation of the Selective Licensing Scheme

Following the successful introduction of the Selective Licensing Scheme pilot in a part of Anglesey ward, the Council has continued to monitor and evaluate

the scheme. An update review was completed at the end of the first 12 months of operation of the pilot scheme, in addition to delivering an 'in-year' briefing on its progress to Members in June 2018.

Delivered Focussed Environmental Health Initiatives

Over the last 12 months the Council has completed a series of targeted and focussed Environmental Health initiatives. For example, in recognition of the impact that partnership working can have on reducing modern slavery, the Council has completed two multi-agency initiatives focussed on tackling issues within Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs), food businesses and nail bars. Also, as there has been a growth of weekend markets attended by small, often inexperienced traders who may lack the knowledge to ensure that they are compliant with their legal responsibilities in relation to food safety and/or trading standards, the Council has undertaken targeted initiatives on markets within the Borough to ensure compliance with food hygiene legislation.

The Council also receives a high number of complaints in relation to HMOs, for example concerns being raised about over-crowding and a lack of adequate fire safety provisions. Building on the work of the Selective Licensing Scheme, the Council has revised the HMO Policy, focusing on identifying and, where necessary, inspecting these types of premises to ensure the provision of safe and decent private rented accommodation.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2019/20

The Council is determined to continue to build on its successes during 2018/19 as it moves forward into the 2019/20 financial year. It will continue to improve performance, service delivery and value for money through delivery of the Council's three Corporate Priorities. Achievement of these priorities will be supported by the Regulatory Services portfolio through delivery of the objectives detailed in the following section. The specific performance indicators identified to measure these objectives are referenced in the paragraphs below.

Review Scrap Metal Dealer Activities (Target RS01)

In the first half of the forthcoming financial year, the Council will be undertaking a review of its Scrap Metal Dealers Policy, to ensure that it continues to be robust and fit for purpose.

Undertake a Review of Relevant Licensing Policies (Targets RS02; RS03)

In addition to the Scrap Metal Dealers Policy, a number of other important Licensing policies are due for a review to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Specifically, in the forthcoming 12 months the Council will conduct a review of its Charitable Collections and Licensing Act policies.

Continue to Deliver and Evaluate the Selective Licensing Scheme (Target RS04)

Following the successful introduction of the Selective Licensing Scheme pilot in a part of Anglesey ward, the Council has continued to monitor and evaluate the scheme completing a review at the end of the first 12 months of operation. The Council will undertake a further review of the Selective Licensing Scheme at the end of the second year of operation to monitor and evaluate the impacts and outcomes of the scheme and consider its future expansion.

Continue to Deliver and Evaluate the Disabled Facilities Grant Service (Target RS05)

The Council adopted a new 'in-house' Disabled Facilities Grant service in 2018 to incorporate more efficient ways of working to secure faster and more cost

efficient adaptations to enable residents to live independently in their own home. The Council will undertake a review of the Disabled Facilities Grant Service to determine any areas to further develop and improve the impact and effectiveness of this valuable service.

***Continue to Develop the Community and Civil Enforcement Service
(Target RS06)***

Parking services continue to evolve and benefit from the introduction of new technology. Opportunity exists to look at how parking services are delivered, to not only maximise the use of modern technology, but to also ensure they are run effectively and efficiency for the benefit of East Staffordshire residents and visitors. Therefore this year the Council will complete a review of its parking services and its use of technology.

Review Public Space Protection Orders in Respect of Dog Fouling and Alcohol Consumption (Target RS07)

In 2016 the Council introduced Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) to help tackle the issue of dog fouling and the consumption of alcohol in public places. These orders are due for a review during 2019/20. The Council will therefore carry out a review of its dog control and alcohol orders, and will compile a programme of actions, including consultation on new and revised PSPOs.

Protecting the public through Enforcement, Environmental Health and Licensing Initiatives (Target RS08)

The Council will undertake a series of initiatives aimed at monitoring compliance and ensuring public protection through the Borough, including:

- Compliance inspections of Scrap Metal Dealer Sites
- Licensed taxi operator base inspections
- Inspection visits on licensed gambling premises
- Multi-agency licensing and enforcement initiatives focussing on licensed premises, drivers and vehicles to ensure compliance with policy and legislation

- Initiatives in relation to modern slavery, focussed on tackling issues within Houses in Multiple Occupation and businesses such as takeaways, car washes, nail bars and tanning salons.
- Targeting unregistered skin piercers to ensure businesses are compliant with the statutory requirements and protect the health and safety of their customers.

The outcome of these initiatives will be reported publicly on a 6 monthly basis.

Deliver Targeted Initiatives in Relation to Unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (Target RS09)

The Council receives a high number of complaints and concerns in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) particularly in relation to over-crowding and a lack of adequate fire safety provisions. Following an amendment to HMO legislation the scope for licensable HMOs has been extended. It is estimated that an additional 250 HMOs require a licence, however since the change in legislation only 50 HMOs have obtained a licence. The Council will undertake a targeted initiative to identify unlicensed HMOs, focussing initially on wards with a high concentration of rented properties, to ensure the provision of safe and decent private rented accommodation.

Complete an Evaluation of all Licensable Animal Activities (Target RS10)

The introduction of legislation for the licensing of activities involving animals has created a new requirement for the provision of information to DEFRA summarising the number of licenses issued and the average level of fees charged. The Council will evaluate all licensable animal activities and report the required data to DEFRA in accordance with the legal requirement.

MEASURES AND TARGETS FOR 2019/20

The Regulatory Services portfolio has identified a number of measures and targets for 2019/20 which will contribute to the delivery of the objectives detailed above. These are set out in the following tables.

Value for Money Council

Ref	Measures	Target 2019/20
RS01	Ensure Robust Licensing Policies	Complete a Review of the Scrap Metal Dealers Policy (September 2019)
RS02	Ensure Robust Licensing Policies	Complete a Review of the Charitable Collection Policy (September 2019)
RS03	Ensure Robust Licensing Policies	Complete a Review of the Licensing Act Policy (March 2020)
RS04	Ensure an Effective Selective Licensing Scheme	Complete an Evaluation of the Selective Licensing Scheme and consider its future expansion (November 2019)
RS05	Ensure an Effective Disabled Facilities Grant Service	Complete a Review of the Disabled Facilities Grant Service (December 2019)
RS06	Develop the use of technology to improve service delivery	Complete a Review of Parking Services and the related use of technology (October 2019)

Ref	Measures	Target 2019/20
RS07	Ensure an Effective Civil and Community Enforcement Service	Review Public Space Protection Orders for Dog Fouling and Alcohol consumption (October 2019)

Environment and Health & Wellbeing

Ref	Measures	Target 2019/20
RS08	Deliver Focussed Environmental Health Initiatives	Provide a six monthly report on Regulatory Services activity including initiatives covering licensed gambling premises, Civil Enforcement, Scrap metal compliance etc (October 2020)
RS9	Deliver Focussed Environmental Health Initiatives	Undertake a targeted Initiative to identify Unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (March 2020)
RS10	Deliver Focussed Environmental Health Initiatives	Complete an evaluation of all Licensable Animal Activities and report to DEFRA (March 2020)