

Meeting of:	Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, 25 June 2025
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Live Well Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Shared Regulatory Services Annual Report 2024-25
Purpose of Report:	To advise members on the performance and financial position of the Shared Regulatory Service for the 2024-25 financial year.
Report Owner:	Head of Shared Regulatory Services Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer, 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 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 2024-25, the Shared Service has largely recovered performance across its traditional metrics after the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. There is still some way to go however in finally 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 had implemented a further core services budget saving of 3% going into the 2024-25 financial year. 	

- The £8.813m 2024/25 Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Budget was agreed by the Joint Committee on 31st January 2024. The net budget increase of £168k included an assumed a £1200 pay award plus an adjustment in respect of the previous year’s pay shortfall, less agreed savings.
- As at 31st March 2025, the SRS has achieved an unaudited outturn deficit of £229k against the 2024/25 £8.813m budget. The outturn position is illustrated in the following table;

	Gross Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance
Authority	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	1,917	1,880	37
Cardiff	5,152	5,391	(239)
Vale	1,744	1,771	(27)
Total Gross Expenditure	8,813	9,042	(229)

- The adverse variances at year end shown against Cardiff and the Vale can be associated with both the Authority Specific and Core elements of the SRS budget and is further detailed in this report
- This position is subject to the completion of the external audit of these accounts by Audit Wales.

Recommendations

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 2024-25 unaudited outturn position is noted

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To meet the requirements set out in Clause 5.1 of the Joint Working Agreement.
2. That Members are aware of the 2024-25 unaudited outturn position

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 tenth report produced under this requirement and covers the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. 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 2025-26. 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 2024-25 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.

- Environmental Protection and Licensing
- Health and Public Protection
- Enterprise and Specialist 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

- Improving Health and wellbeing
- Safeguarding the Vulnerable
- 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 (JWA), originally executed in April 2015, underpins the entire service provision. The JWA contains a number of 'milestones and requirements'. In accordance with those requirements:

- Each year, the Wales Audit Office completes an independent financial audit of the service.
- The Business Plan for 2025-26 is presented for political approval in papers to the June 2025 Joint Committee meeting.
- The Joint Committee is due to receive an audited statement of accounts for 2024-25 at its December 2025 meeting.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

2.1 The 2024-25 Annual Report illustrated that the Shared Service had delivered the necessary financial savings and delivered the majority of the business plan actions for that year. The Key Milestones set for 2024-25 were:

- *Delivery of the SRS Business Plan 2024-25 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 further develop the 'growing our own' approach (including through regulatory apprenticeships when available), as part of the wider recruitment and retention strategy.*
- *In light of the continued pressures on public sector budgets, further explore, implement and maximise opportunities for income generation and cost recovery.*
- *Review the agile working arrangements for the service to ensure that technology is being exploited fully to improve service delivery.*

Human Resources

2.2 Overall sickness absence levels for 2024-25 were **8.34 days per FTE person** overall. This represents an increase on the same measure for 2023-24 when the overall sickness absence rate stood at **6.93 days per FTE person**. Unfortunately, the Service had a number of instances of long-term absence over the course of 2024-25, and closer examination of the year end totals identifies an increase in long term days lost per FTE from **3.7** in 2023-24 to **6.34** in 2024-25. It is pleasing to see however, that this was accompanied by a significant improvement in short term absence.

2.3 **Figure 1** below provides some context for the levels of sickness absence seen in 2024-25 and demonstrates that they are among the lowest levels experienced across the Service.

Figure 1: 2024-25 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
2024-25	2.00	6.34	8.34
2023-24	3.22	3.70	6.93

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

2.4 Members will be familiar with the on-going shortage of suitably qualified Environmental Health and Trading Standards staff across Wales and England. This, coupled with an ageing workforce have continued to underscore the urgent need to address this into the medium and long term. During 2024-25, a number of SRS workstreams have focussed on the effective recruitment, and crucially, also the retention, of staff.

2.5 The 2023-24 Annual Report, presented to the Joint Committee at its June 2024 meeting, set out the rationale for changing a number of job titles across the Service. following concerns that the professional disciplines of Environmental Health and Trading Standards were not being reflected. It is highly likely that job titles in use since the inception of the Service such 'Commercial Services Officer' and 'Neighbourhood Services Officer' were hindering recruitment, as those individuals seeking Environmental Health Officer or Trading Standards Officer opportunities were unlikely to enter the then SRS job titles into their search parameters. Making the change to recognise professional disciplines would also resolve the confusion often expressed by businesses and residents as to who they are dealing with.

2.6 Following the resounding 97% identified as being in favour of the changes in an all-staff consultation, the following changes came into effect on 1st October 2024:

Previous job title	Job title from 1st October 2024
Neighbourhood Services Officer	Environmental Health Officer
Neighbourhood Services Technical Officer	Environmental Health Technical Officer
Commercial Services Officer (EH)	Environmental Health Officer
Commercial Services Technical Officer (EH)	Environmental Health Technical Officer
Commercial Services Officer (TS)	Trading Standards Officer
Commercial Services Technical Officer (TS)	Trading Standards Technical Officer

2.7 The opportunity was also taken to amend two of the three SRS sector titles to better reflect their remit and scope, i.e.,

Previous SRS sector title	Sector title from 1 st October 2024
Neighbourhood Services	Environmental Protection and Licensing
Commercial Services	Health and Public Protection
Enterprise and Specialist Services	Enterprise and Specialist Services <i>No change</i>

2.8 In line with these changes to two of the SRS sector titles, the respective Operational Manager job titles were amended accordingly.

2.9 Over the course of 2024-25, the Service has continued its commitment to ‘growing our own’ staff. In the autumn of 2024, a further 3 members of SRS staff received match funding support to begin further qualifications, with all of them studying towards the *MSc in Environmental Health*. This is in addition to the 3 members of staff currently concluding their studies towards the same qualification, and the 12 members of staff who have successfully achieved additional qualifications through match funded study. The qualifications attained since match funding applications were first considered in within SRS in 2017 are as follows:

- Eight achieved the MSc in Environmental Health
- One achieved the MSc in Health and Public Services Management
- One achieved the MSc in Leadership and Management
- One achieved the MSc in Public Sector Leadership
- One achieved the Masters in Public Health qualification

The success of the initiative is evident, not only in demonstrating how SRS values its staff and supports their development, but in equipping the Service with the necessary skills and behaviours to shape future leaders. All but two of the eighteen colleagues supported to date in further study, remain with the Service.

In the run up to the new academic year, expressions of interest will again be sought for opportunities for further match funded study. Given the financial pressures facing the Service, applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis in line with the Performance Review process.

2.10 The lack of a **Regulatory apprenticeship** in Wales has been a cause of frustration for the Service, particularly in the context of the recruitment and retention pressures and an ageing workforce as highlighted above. For the last five years, SRS has led on the development of a Level 4 Regulatory Apprenticeship for Wales. This has been a long journey, but one that has arrived at its destination with all the necessary components now in place, namely the necessary qualification, the apprenticeship pathway, funding value and Training Provider to deliver the course materials.

- 2.11** In a major step forward in May 2024, the necessary qualification was designated by Qualifications Wales as the Level 4 Diploma in Regulatory Compliance (see the [Agored Cymru Level 4 Diploma in Regulatory Compliance](#)).
- 2.12** Later in the year, on 1st November 2024, the apprenticeship framework was published (see <https://acwcerts.co.uk/web/framework/regulatory-compliance>), and finally the apprenticeship funding value was agreed. All of this meant that a Training Provider could commit to delivering the course materials to students across Wales and by the end of 2024-25, arrangements were being put in place for the initial cohort to begin the Regulatory Compliance Apprenticeship in Wales. This initial cohort beginning in the summer of 2025 comprises existing staff working in Regulatory Services across Wales, but without a recognised qualification. SRS looks forward to recruiting two Apprentices under the new scheme ready for the next intake by the Training Provider, scheduled for the end of September 2025.
- 2.13** Apprenticeships can work well for all involved. Apprentices will now be able to ‘earn while they learn’ as they begin their careers in Regulatory Services, without the need to run up a student debt. For employers, apprenticeships mean that they are able to play an active role in the development of their staff, making sure that they are job-ready and that each is an asset to the organisation.
- 2.14** After 5 years in the making, the launch of the Regulatory Apprenticeship for Wales is a hugely positive development, particularly in the currently very difficult recruitment landscape. There is no time to stand still however, and thought now turns to the development of Level 6 apprenticeships to sustain the Environmental Health and Trading Standards professional qualification pathways well into the future.
- 2.15** Once again, staff of the Shared Service have gone above and beyond to assist residents and reputable businesses alike. This has been recognised throughout the year in the positive feedback received about individuals and the services they provide, examples of which are included later in this Annual Report, and in the recognition / awards received by the Service.

Operational Performance

- 2.16** Operational performance throughout 2024-25 has been reported both to the Joint Committee and to each partner Council through the legacy systems. The 2024-25 SRS Business Plan was written at a time when the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis were still being very much felt, and at a time when a further 3% Service budget saving had just been found. As result, the 2024-25 Business Plan was sufficiently realistic in setting out the SRS priorities for the year. It follows that performance against the 2024-25 Business Plan has been 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 2025-26 Business Plan. The following paragraphs reference the key performance criteria.

- 2.17** The detail of performance against all the agreed performance indicators is set out in **Appendix 1** to this report. Specifically in relation to the Food inspection programme, it is now two years since the Service moved from the FSA COVID-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan, towards resumption of the full programme. Working with the Food Standards Agency, a risk-based, bespoke solution had been agreed to bridge the gap between the Recovery Plan and resumption of the full SRS Food programmes. It is very pleasing to see that 2024-25 (like 2023-24) saw 100% of the inspections completed that were due for Category A and Category B rated premises, as well as 100% completion of due Category C rated premises. In addition, excellent progress has been made in visiting new businesses. Once again, this is a tribute to the hard work of Officers during the year. Further detail on food hygiene and food standards interventions is provided at 2.24 below.
- 2.18** 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 31 prosecutions that concluded in the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 are set out in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.19** SRS has continued to tailor its efforts to support the particular challenges facing each of the partner Councils, including those arising from the cost-of-living crisis, the climate change agenda, dealing with anti-social behaviour, and in supporting air quality compliance.
- 2.20** In respect of Licensing, SRS presented Cabinet and Council reports over the course of 2024-25 under a number of policy areas, including the Cumulative Impact Policy under the Licensing Act 2003 in Cardiff. In the Vale, a report was taken to Cabinet regarding changes to the taxi tariff for Hackney carriages and in both Bridgend and Cardiff reports were taken on the Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act 2005.

Significant Service achievements

- 2.21** Paragraph 1.5 above highlights the priority themes for Shared Regulatory Services, and a range of achievements over the course of 2024-25 demonstrate progress toward delivering the outcomes associated with these priorities. The 2025-26 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

2.22 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

2.23 A set of unique challenges face SRS in delivering 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 emerged, post pandemic which have added 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. The worst of these cases resulted in the investigation and subsequent prosecution of the food business operators, and during 2024-25, a number of these cases finally concluded in court.
- 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.

2.24 Reflecting the increase in enforcement action required at food premises, a total of eight food prosecution cases, involving nineteen defendants, concluded during the course 2024-25 financial year. The combined impact of these eight concluded cases was:

- **19 defendants** pleading or being found guilty
- Fines of **£38,957**
- Costs of **£8,943**

2.25 Percentage of food establishments broadly compliant (formerly PAM 023)

This indicator continues to provide a measure 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’ later in this report. 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, exceeds 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
2024-25	98.02%	95.80%	97.55%
2023-24	98.03%	95.64%	96.63%
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 2024-25, some 889 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.

- 2.26** The Food Standards Agency audit of the Service took place in February 2025. Its purpose was to assess service planning and delivery interventions following the end of the FSA COVID 19 Recovery Plan. Over the course of the two days, auditors looked in detail at the Food Hygiene, Food Standards and Port Health functions by reviewing premises files, officer authorisations, officer training records, prosecutions and other enforcement interventions, complaints and service requests.
- 2.27** The audit report recognises the significant progress the Service has made in delivering on the Food Hygiene Programme, and to this end, the assessment of Assurance received was Moderate. The Auditors found that the SRS *'food hygiene service is demonstrating significant progress on re-alignment with the intervention frequencies contained within the Food Law Code of Practice (the Code), whilst the food standards service has made some improvement in addressing the backlog of both rated premises using food hygiene interventions and also unrated premises'*
- 2.28** Members will be familiar with the excellent progress made in respect of Food Hygiene delivery in recent years (as reflected in the performance figures included in Appendix 1). Moving forward the focus of the Service is to echo its success in transforming Food Hygiene delivery, to achieve similar success in the Food Standards sector.

The Vapes Market

- 2.29** The SRS Annual Report for 2023-24 reflected on the rapid expansion in the vapes market and the growing concern that while the devices can be helpful in assisting smokers to quit tobacco, they are increasingly being used by non-smokers and by youngsters. The marketing of vapes in attractive packaging, and in a range of appealing flavours only adds to their widespread popularity, leading to calls for stronger regulation of the market.
- 2.30** Added to this, the UK has seen a huge influx of illegal vapes into UK supply chains. These are products that have not been registered with the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), do not comply with the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 in respect of their tank liquid capacity exceeding the 2ml permitted (equivalent to approximately 600 puffs), and the nicotine strength of the liquid exceeding 20mg / ml. The high incidence of illegal vapes makes enforcement of the sector particularly challenging.
- 2.31** As a snapshot of the scale of the illegal vapes problem, during 2024-25 SRS Officers carried out several operations to identify the sale of such products. As a result, 45 test purchases were attempted with 26 premises found to be selling illegal vapes. 3793 illegal vapes were subsequently seized by officers with an estimated retail value of over £38,000. Retailers identified as selling these products received a written warning and advice and were subject to follow-up inspection.

2.32 During the last year, the Tobacco and Vapes Bill has made good progress towards becoming law, having been developed as part of a four nations approach to tackling smoking and vaping among young people. The Bill envisages a number of regulatory requirements in the supply chains for tobacco and vapes, all of which would fall to Regulatory Services to regulate. These include:

- From 2027, prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to anyone born on or after 1st January 2009
- A retailer licensing scheme for the sale of tobacco products, herbal smoking products, cigarette papers, vaping and nicotine products
- Restricting vape flavours
- Regulating vape packaging and product presentation
- Controlling the advertising and promotion of tobacco, vapes and other products
- Making smoke-free places also vape free and heated tobacco-free places
- Exploring further restrictions for non-nicotine vapes and other nicotine consumer products such as nicotine pouches

2.33 From 1st June 2025, separate legislation, the Environmental Protection (Single-use Vapes) (Wales) Regulations 2024, comes into force. The new law creates offences for selling or supplying disposable vapes, offering them for sale or supply, or having them in possession for sale or supply. Disposable or single use vapes are those that either have a battery that cannot be recharged, or are not refillable. The law applies regardless of whether vapes are nicotine free. Again, enforcement responsibility for supply chain compliance sits with SRS.

Special Procedures

2.34 The long-anticipated Special Procedures licensing regime went live on 29th November 2024, when the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 (Commencement No. 8 and Transitional Provisions) Order 2024 brought into force certain provisions of Part 4 of the Act as well Schedule 3 to the Act.

2.35 The new licensing rules apply across Wales for the following special procedures:

- Acupuncture (including dry needling)
- Body piercing (including ear piercing)
- Electrolysis
- Tattooing (including semi-permanent makeup and microblading)

2.36 A person who performs any of the four designated special procedures, must apply for a special procedure licence. This applies to all individuals who were previously

registered to perform such procedures and all new applicants. The purpose of the licensing scheme is to:

- Improve hygiene and safety standards
- Ensure such standards are consistent across Wales
- Help protect the health of clients
- Support them to choose licensed individuals operating from approved premises and vehicles

2.37 The new licensing scheme made provision for a period of transition, allowing practitioners and businesses who were previously registered under the old registration scheme to continue to practice in the short term. Individuals were required to submit their application form under the new scheme by 28 February 2025. This resulted in teams being incredibly busy processing applications and undertaking the necessary checks to ensure compliance and the correct standards of infection prevention and control. SRS Officers have led on local authority engagement on the topic through the Environmental Health Wales Health & Safety Expert Panel to ensure consistency of approach and regulation.

2.38 By year end across the SRS region, **190 personal applications had been received, of which 99 had been granted.** In respect of premises approvals, **96 applications had been received with 56 certificates granted.** Licensing teams have faced a high demand from the sector, with some applications having been deemed invalid due to errors in their submission. Officers continue to provide support and assistance to applicants as resources allow.

Figure 3: Special Procedures applications received and licences/ certificates issued in 2025-26

	Personal Licence		Approved premises certificate	
	<i>No. applications</i>	<i>No. granted</i>	<i>No. applications</i>	<i>No. granted</i>
Bridgend	37	22	22	13
Cardiff	111	56	49	31
Vale	42	21	25	12
TOTAL	190	99	96	56

Empty Homes (formerly PAM 013 and PAM 045)

2.39 The Service continues to report on the *percentage of empty private properties brought back into use, and 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 quantifying the reduction in the number of empty properties as a consequence of

intervention by 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.

Funding secured from the Vale of Glamorgan Council from the start of 2023-24, means that the Shared Regulatory Service now contributes a dedicated resource to bringing properties back into beneficial use through intervention and enforcement in all three partner Council areas.

In **Bridgend**, SRS continues to target resources towards the top 20 worst empty homes cases. On-going concerns are discussed at the corporate Empty Property Working Group with properties being targeted on a risk assessed to deliver a co-ordinated approach to enforcement, making the best use of resources available. By making use of the Transforming Towns Enforcement Fund, a Compulsory Purchase Order is being progressed in respect of a long-term problematic property. The fund is also enabling a further two properties to be targeted for Enforced Sale.

In **Cardiff**, through a combination of dialogue, incentives and enforcement action, 162 empty properties were returned to use in 2024-25. This far exceeds the figures achieved in previous years and is attributable to the dedication of SRS Officers in tackling empty homes across the city, together with the corporate focus achieved through the cross-departmental Empty Homes Working Group, chaired by the Cabinet member for Housing & Communities. An action plan submitted to, and agreed by, Welsh Government identified our most problematic empty properties and prioritised associated actions. Targeted enforcement of these most problematic properties is yielding positive results with several properties now occupied, and cases progressing with the service of enforcement notices and works.

Works in default are also being completed at properties with the aim of enforcing their sale if the debt is not paid. In addition to this proactive work, the team also works reactively, responding to complaints and enquiries specifically relating empty properties. The team continues to make strong progress to address long term empty properties within Cardiff, an area of important work during a cost-of-living crisis and the shortage of affordable, available housing.

In the **Vale of Glamorgan**, SRS works in conjunction with the Regeneration and Planning teams to bring empty homes back into use. The Vale of Glamorgan Empty Property Working Group is now well established and meets quarterly to co-ordinate Council-wide disciplines in reaching objectives. In addition to case work arising from complaints made about empty properties, proactive inspections are carried out at properties that have been empty for over 10 years, and enforcement action is instigated where necessary.

Work also continues on the remaining key properties, again utilising the 5-stage escalation letter process to engage with owners. SRS has been instrumental in re-establishing the Vale of Glamorgan Empty Property Working Group to coordinate council wide disciplines in reaching objectives. Links have also been established with registered social landlords to explore opportunities to work more closely together in bringing properties back into use.

Building Safety

- 2.40** Welsh Government has repeated its commitment to introduce a new Building Safety Bill in the current Senedd term. 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.
- 2.41** The Joint Inspection Team (JIT), has begun its inspection programme with several reports having been produced. The first tranche of buildings inspected has been in Cardiff, Swansea and Wrexham and has cut across the public and private sector. Officers have recently met with the JIT to discuss their inspection programme for 2025, which within the SRS region, is likely to include a number of building types including local authority owned, private sector rented and student accommodation. Welsh Government has been approached on the need for additional local authority resource to work alongside the JIT, as JIT members have not been authorised with powers (including powers of entry). In parallel with the inspection programme, an evaluation of the JIT is also taking place.
- 2.42** 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.
- 2.43** There remains a great deal of work to be done in this area and SRS continues to represent the three partner authorities in the various stakeholder groups helping to inform Welsh Government and shaping the legislative programme as it moves forward.

Protecting the Environment

- 2.44** 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. 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 short term, SRS ensures that communities are protected from nuisance and are safer, by investigating noise complaints, and dealing with straying dogs and other animals.

Animal Welfare

- 2.45** Once again, officers have been involved in a number of animal welfare investigations, linked to unlicensed, **illegal dog breeding**. Several of these cases are pending in the court system, and it is clear that this unlicensed activity continues to operate across some sophisticated criminal networks, being seen as profitable business model where the risk of punishment is perceived to be less than that associated with other illegal supply chains. Ongoing intelligence and complaints received suggest that this trend is set to continue for some time.
- 2.46** Faced with the appalling conditions in which breeding dogs and puppies are being found, officers have no choice but to act on Veterinary advice and seize animals to remove them from further harm. While cases are dealt with as quickly as possible, seizures unfortunately result in significant costs for the Service in boarding and caring for the dogs pending the courts granting ownership to the Council. It is only at this point in proceedings that the rehoming process can begin. The reality is that at the conclusion of a case, costs may not be awarded in full, if at all.
- 2.47** While a number of these prosecution cases remain in the court system, two were concluded in the 2024-25 financial year. Following complaints from neighbours in the first of these cases, officers attended a residential property in Cardiff and found six Kangol dogs (a large breed) living in extremely poor conditions. The defendant was charged with offences under the Animal Welfare Act and also under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations for being in possession of drugs not authorised for use in the UK, and administration of a drug other than under the direction of a Veterinary Surgeon. This was the second time in a matter of months that SRS officers had attended the property in response to intelligence that illegal dog breeding was taking place. On the previous occasion, it had been necessary to seize a total of 38 dogs and puppies from the house and that particular case (involving other defendants) is currently awaiting trial.
- 2.48** The second of the illegal dog breeding cases to conclude during 2024-25 also presented as a result of neighbour concerns that dog breeding was taking place in 'inhumane conditions' at a residential property in Cardiff. On arrival at the property, the Investigating Officer was confronted with the dreadful conditions in which dogs

were being kept by the unlicensed breeder. A Veterinary Surgeon reviewed the wellbeing of the dogs and offences under both section 4 and section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act were established. The defendant was prosecuted and sentenced at Cardiff Crown Court to one month imprisonment (to run concurrently with the prison sentence he was serving for another matter). He was also disqualified from keeping, or being involved in the keeping, of dogs for a period of 6 years.

- 2.49** The dogs seized in both of the above cases were subject to successful section 20 proceedings to give ownership of the animals to the Council, allowing them to be rehomed.
- 2.50** Each year, the RSPCA recognises exceptional contributions and unwavering commitment to protecting, promoting, and enhancing animal welfare through its PawPrints awards. The aim of the organisation in giving these annual awards is to shine a light on the organisations that have 'gone the extra mile' for animals, and entries are judged by an external panel of animal welfare experts. Once again, SRS has been recognised in three categories, namely Stray Dog Services, Animal Licensing Activity and Kennelling.
- 2.51** The hard work of our Animal Wardens and Animal Health and Welfare Officers throughout the year resulted in the following being awarded in 2024:
- **Stray Dog Provision: Platinum**
 - **Animal-related Licensing: Gold Award**
 - **Kennelling: Gold Award**
- 2.52** This builds on SRS success in 2023 when Gold Awards were received in each of the above categories. The Platinum Award for stray dog provision is a new development to acknowledge those organisations achieving the Gold standard in a category for at least 5 years. This is the first and only time the Platinum Award has been achieved in Wales.

Air Quality

- 2.53** During 2024-25, 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 2024 Annual Progress Reports (APRs) detailing the results for the previous year's (2023) data for each area and reporting these to the respective Cabinets. Failure to produce these reports can lead to the receipt of a Welsh Government direction under Section 85(3) of the Environment Act 1995.
- 2.54** In **Bridgend** the 2024 APR demonstrated that only two sites, both located within Park Street Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) still exceeded the air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide NO₂ as prescribed in the Air Quality (Wales) Regulations 2000 and the Air Quality (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2002. All other locations within

Bridgend County Borough continued to meet all other relevant air quality objectives. The recorded NO₂ concentrations at these locations in 2023 were 43.3 µg/m³ and 42.9 µg/m³. This represented a reduction in NO₂ concentrations of 12% and 17% at these locations.

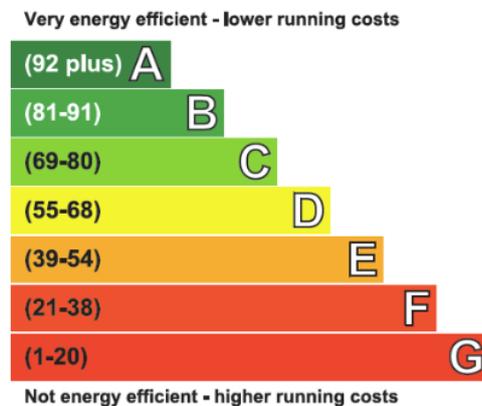
- 2.55** The 2024 APR also provided an update to Cabinet members on the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for the AQMA on Park Street. which was approved by Cabinet in April 2024. As detailed at the time of approval of the AQAP, Cabinet agreed to retain measures in the plan, to allow an assessment as to whether there is sufficient downward trend of NO₂ levels on Park Street as compliance has been modelled to be achieved by 2026. If exceedances show upward trends or other concerns identified, then an assessment on the necessity to consider implementation of the retained measures in AQAP will be undertaken in 2025-26.
- 2.56** In **Cardiff**, the 2024 APR demonstrated that out of the 135 non-automatic monitoring locations across the entire City, no monitoring sites recorded exceedances of the annual average objective set for NO₂ of 40 µg/m³.
- 2.57** The APR provided an overview of the concentrations within each of the 4 AQMAs in Cardiff. Monitoring in the AQMAs demonstrated that compliance was being achieved in each of them. Concentrations of NO₂ at one location within the Llandaff AQMA have been found to be close to the annual mean NO₂ Air Quality Standard (40µg/m³) in recent years. However, NO₂ concentrations at this location in 2023 have improved when compared to 2022 and are currently within 10% of the annual mean NO₂. When examining average NO₂ concentrations at non-automatic diffusion tube sites across Cardiff, pollutant concentrations across Cardiff are now lower than those experienced during the pandemic.
- 2.58** The APR also gave a further update on the ongoing work on Castle Street in relation to the Welsh Government Air Quality Direction. The report confirmed that approval of the Final Plan and preferred option for Castle Street had been provided by the Deputy First Minister on 4th November 2024.
- 2.59** In the **Vale of Glamorgan**, the 2024 APR demonstrated that there were 53 specifically allocated non-automatic monitoring sites across the Vale of Glamorgan which monitored levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). From the 53 locations monitored throughout the Vale with the use of passive diffusion tubes, no sites breached the national NO₂ annual objective of 40 µg/m³ or the NO₂ 1-hour objective (200 µg/m³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times per year). Overall, the Vale of Glamorgan has seen a downward trend in NO₂ levels since before the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.60** The report also provided an update on a successful application to the Local Air Quality Management support fund from Welsh Government, for funding to upgrade and

enhance the current real time air quality monitoring capabilities within the Vale. As a result of this, three new monitors were installed in Barry, Dinas Powys and Cowbridge in Q3, the locations being decided using a risk-based approach in line with relevant technical guidance.

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

- 2.61** 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.
- 2.62** Energy Performance Certificates were first introduced in the UK in 2008. 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



- 2.63** 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.
- 2.64** Building on the work commenced in 2023-24, owners, agents and landlords of private rented properties continue to be contacted 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. Officer interventions have been focussed 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.
- 2.65** By the end of the 2024-25, a total of 164 properties had been sufficiently improved to take them out of the F and G energy efficiency rating to become E rated or better.

Also as a result of SRS interventions during the year, some 365 previously unrated private rented properties now hold Energy Performance Certificates, having achieved ratings ranging from C to E.

- 2.66** Alongside the above progress, work also began during the year to tackle those in the sector who have failed to engage with the Service to bring about the required improvements (or demonstrate the existence of a *bona fide* exemption). In September 2024, a new MEES Annex was added to the SRS Compliance and Enforcement Policy, after approval by the Joint Committee. By the end of March 2025, 62 Compliance Notices had been sent to landlords, and this had the desired effect in many cases. However, it proved necessary to issue 16 penalty charge notices to landlords who remained non-compliant with the law.
- 2.67** The impact of this work, in terms of both the climate change and also the cost-of-living agendas, translates into tangible figures submitted to the partner Councils on a quarterly basis. The combined improvement figures across the SRS region to the end of 2024-25 equates to approximately:

- ***Reduction in carbon tonnage***

A reduction of **456.5 tonnes** in the amount of CO₂ produced at the improved properties

- ***Reduction in energy use at improved properties in kWh***

A reduction of **483,098 kWh** in the energy needed to heat the improved properties.

Safeguarding the Vulnerable

- 2.68** 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.
- 2.69** During 2024-25, SRS received 95 complaints or intelligence logs regarding **underage sales** of alcohol, tobacco, vapes, fireworks and knives. With the assistance of young volunteers, Officers responded by staging a total of 73 attempts to purchase a range of age restricted products during the year. 9 of these attempts to purchase resulted in a sale (12%) of alcohol, vapes or fireworks. The circumstances of each case were fully investigated, and appropriate enforcement action taken. While the Service will always recommend a stepped approach to enforcement, over the course of 2024-25, three cases concluding in court saw the successful prosecution of three businesses for underage sales of alcohol, vapes or fireworks.

- 2.70** Once again, Officers have investigated a number of significant **rogue builder** or **doorstep crime** cases. 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.
- 2.71** During the year, all three partner Council Legal Services teams prosecuted rogue builder / doorstep crime cases (one in Bridgend, two in Cardiff and one in the Vale). The outcome of these cases is significant, with the four defendants receiving a total of **11 years and 9 months** in immediate prison sentences, as well as in one case a 10 year **Criminal Behaviour Order**. Proceeds of Crime applications are in progress in three of the four prosecutions, and it is hoped that as a result of this, compensation for the victims in those cases will be possible.
- 2.72** Details of all four cases are given in the broader case narratives provided at **Appendix 2**, but to illustrate the impact of the offending on local residents:

Rogue builder based in Bridgend County Borough

The victims in this case suffered significant financial loss, amounting to over £200,000. The residents also endured months of distress as they fought to get their home improvement projects completed or to get their money refunded.

The rogue builder presented himself as a competent businessman, but the truth behind that image was quite different. The builder engaged in misleading and fraudulent trading practices in his dealings with customers, and using classic rogue trader practices, he 'robbed Peter to pay Paul' by continuing to take money from new clients in order to do at least some work for existing customers.

Using a string of trading names, he created a web of deceit, including starting a new company when one went into liquidation and later using a completely different trading name to distance himself from the growing number of poor Trustpilot reviews being left by customers.

The witness statements in this case illustrate in detail the misery brought on the residents over many months, through for example jobs started and not finished, goods not ordered despite specific payments having been made for them, poor workmanship, and failure to obtain necessary Planning and Building Control consents. The rogue builder relied on a façade of stock images from Pinterest and other websites and passed them off as examples of his previous work.

The defendant finally pleaded guilty to 11 counts of fraud, 1 count of fraudulent trading and 1 count of unfair commercial practice. He was sentenced to 43 months in prison (3 years, 7 months).

Rogue builder based in Cardiff

The second of the two Cardiff cases had been in the court system for a considerable time, and saw the defendant face 13 charges for offences under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 and the Fraud Act 2006. The case arose as a result of him

- grossly overcharging for his work,
- exaggerating the severity of the work needing to be done on the victims' properties,
- advising for work to be done on properties which was not needed in the first place, and
- any work done being to a very poor standard.

The total loss caused to the victims by the defendant's criminal behaviour was £175,000, with one of the victims being a 93-year-old lady. The court heard how he had targeted vulnerable individuals to commit his fraud, leaving them emotionally, physically and financially burdened.

He was sentenced to 5 years and 2 months in prison and a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) was sought to restrict his ability to offer and provide building and home improvement services in the future. Worded as follows, the CBO was imposed for a period of 10 years, meaning that his activity will be restricted long after he leaves prison

'The defendant is prohibited from obtaining, undertaking or doing anything whatsoever designed to lead to the obtaining or undertaking of work of any nature, including building, maintenance and gardening work at the home of any individual in the UK, whether on his own, or another's behalf, or instructing others to do so'

Rogue trader based in the Vale of Glamorgan

The defendant in this case contracted with residents to undertake landscaping works. The customers had been taken in by the competitive prices quoted and by the almost immediate start dates offered, but things took an unpleasant turn when the cost of the jobs spiralled, in one case to more than £20,000. Multiple excuses were given for the increasing price, and for the poor progress of work, including inflation and the cost of materials. The defendant also cited various personal challenges including the death of his own mother (who, it was later established, was alive and well).

He pleaded guilty to multiple offences under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations, and was sentenced to 9 months in prison.

2.73 The above outcomes do little to convey the sheer hard work involved in conducting these often-complex investigations while at the same time supporting the victims of

rogue builders, doorstep criminals and scammers who are suffering financially and emotionally as a result. The following excerpts illustrate how much the work of officers is appreciated by residents

- *'I am writing to you today because I would really like to thank you so much for your perseverance and help with regard to the scam. It was a devastating thing to happen and one I have never experienced in my life. Owing to your experience and help it has ended well and enabled me to feel much better and to restore my faith.*

I am 92 years of age and have found it hard to believe that hurtful things such as these scams take place. I shall remember you in your work which is so valuable and thank you again for all your experience, kindness and thoughtfulness to myself and my small family'.

And

- *'There are not powerful enough words to let you know how eternally grateful I am that chance meant I was to come across you and your colleagues and boss at a time of absolute despair in my life. I know that it is the work that you do but the marvellous and always swift communication and guidance, along with the support you gave were outstanding and so appreciated....(The outcome has brought) release of the stress and above all the justice that happened for us, all because of your hard and unrelenting work'*

2.74 Hosted by SRS, the **Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit (WIMLU)** has as its public-facing identity Stop Loan Sharks Wales. With the cost-of-living crisis continuing to be felt over the course of the year, it will come as no surprise that illegal money lenders or loan sharks have been poised to exploit the vulnerable in times of crisis, right across Wales. Reporting rates to the Unit are often low however, with victims unwilling to come forward let alone name a lender for fear of reprisal. Over the course of 2024-25, twenty pieces of intelligence were received about illegal lending and eleven lenders were investigated as a result. Linked to these investigations, 110 victims have been supported, with 105 having had their debts written off.

2.75 While no further prosecution cases against loan sharks concluded in the 2024-25 financial year, a number are currently in the court system and will be reported on in due course. In addition, a number of loan sharks are currently under investigation. During the year, officers seized nearly £40,000 in cash, and the estimated value of assets restrained under the Proceeds of Crime Act was in the region of £400,000.

2.76 The WIMLU 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 to 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 2024-25 training was delivered to 11 different organisations from all over Wales drawn from different aspects of local government, and the housing, advice and charitable sectors. These training sessions were attended by a total of 249 colleagues from within these sectors.

Supporting the Local economy

- 2.77** 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, including through social media, 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.
- 2.78** 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. As of 31st March, the SRS Primary Authority portfolio had a total of 35 partnerships with a range of local and national businesses. The Service can charge for work done under these arrangements on the basis of full cost recovery.
- 2.79** **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.
- 2.80** SRS officers carry out regular exercises with partner agencies and the assistance of tobacco detection dogs to locate illegal product (which will usually be concealed)

whilst on site. During 2024-25, **86,540 illegal cigarettes** and **30kg (600 pouches) of illegal hand rolling tobacco** were seized during SRS operations. The equivalent street value of that haul was £110,500. Supply chains for illegal tobacco are invariably linked to wider criminality, and such is their sophistication that retail premises are able to restock almost immediately after the seizure of illegal product.

2.81 While seizures of this kind remain a useful disruption tool, tackling the widespread availability of illegal tobacco requires a more targeted approach along the supply chain. With this alternative approach in mind, some years ago Officers began a major investigation into the supply of illegal tobacco. While originating in Cardiff, the case also involved outlets in both the Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan Council areas. When the case, code named Operation USK was brought to court, its complexities, multiple defendants and sheer size meant that it had to be divided into two separate Crown Court trials. Ultimately all 11 defendants were found guilty or had changed their pleas to guilty in respect of supplying illegal tobacco and nitrous oxide cannisters. Sentencing was finally completed in July 2024, with the following results:

- 6 of the defendants received custodial sentences totalling **27 years, 4 months**
- 5 of the defendants received suspended sentences totalling **9 years, 2 months**, with a requirement to undertake a total of 500 hrs unpaid work.

A Proceeds of Crime hearing will follow.



2.82 Last year's Annual Report featured a first for the Shared Service with the successful **closure of a retail outlet** under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. After hearing of the harm caused in the community as a result of the supply of illegal tobacco and vapes, the Magistrates Court imposed a 3-month closure order on the retail shop in March 2024. This was subsequently extended through a further application to the Court which resulted in this particular outlet remaining closed for a total of 6 months, concluding in September 2024.

2.83 During 2024-25, a further two retail outlets were successfully closed in this way, each for a period of 3 months. This new approach is proving to be a highly compelling and impactful enforcement tool, and applications are being considered in respect of other problematic premises.

Maximising the use of resources

- 2.84** Maximising the use of resources was the original catalyst for creating SRS, and work in this area continues. By reducing repetition 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 income generation and cost recovery culture.
- 2.85** Further improvements to the **SRS website** have taken place over the last year in order to ensure the best possible customer journey. During 2024-25, the SRS website had 167,498 page views. Once again, our noise and air pollution web pages continue to receive the most page views of all areas.
- 2.86** The SRS website is supplemented by our **social media** offerings, namely [Instagram](#) and the SRS [LinkedIn](#) account. Social media channels continue to be an effective way of getting information to a large number of businesses and residents.
- 2.87** 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 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.
- 2.88** In making the best use of its resources, SRS looks for opportunities to streamline how things are done in all areas of the Service. With this in mind, work continues to pilot the use of **handheld tablet devices** to replace the paper system currently used to record the results of food inspections. It is hoped that this approach can be mainstreamed across the Food Service early in 2025-26 to bring the following benefits:
- Direct uploading of information on to the database without the need for Officer time in scanning multiple documents
 - Reduction in the consumption of paper and lower printing costs
 - Less travel time for Officers in having to pick up and drop off paperwork.
- 2.89** 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.

- 2.90** Looking ahead to 2025-26, there will be an expectation on the Shared Service to deliver on several new areas of regulatory law without the benefit of Welsh Government funding to provide any additional resource. Chief amongst these will be the Building Safety agenda, changes in the law concerning vapes, and the Food (Promotion and Presentation) (Wales) Regulations 2025 due to come into effect in March 2026 to restrict the marketing of foods high in fat, sugar and salt.
- 2.91** It is pleasing to note that recovery of income levels across our paid-for services (through training for businesses, Primary Authority / other business advice, the UKAS accredited metrology laboratory and specialist environmental monitoring services) has been sustained since the sharp fall experienced during the COVID pandemic. With the continued pressures on public sector finances, now more than ever, the establishment of new income streams and cost recovery will play a crucial role in protecting and sustaining the Service. Building on recent initiatives in this space such as the Digital Forensics work, groundwork was laid in 2024 -25 for SRS to provide a discrete service for another local authority, and over the course of 25-26, the Service is committed to establishing new, innovative ways in which to maximise income generation.

Financial Performance

- 2.92** The Gross Revenue Budget and outturn position for 2024/25 are shown in the tables below, with the position in respect of each of the partners detailed to include both Authority Specific (overspend £167k) and Core expenditure positions. The service achieved an unaudited £229k overspend against a gross revenue budget of £8.813m, as illustrated in the following table.

Table 1

	Gross Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance
Authority	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	1,917	1,880	37
Cardiff	5,152	5,391	(239)
Vale	1,744	1,771	(27)
Total Gross Expenditure	8,813	9,042	(229)

- 2.93** Over the last few quarters, the ability of the Service to recruit into key roles has improved and retention levels have been more encouraging than in recent years. Given the difficult recruitment landscapes for regulatory services across the country however, there is no room for complacency. The 'growing our own' approach is now firmly embedded with staff being developed both in their roles and in the gaining of

professional qualifications, enabling them to progress within the Service as future vacancies arise.

- 2.94** For context the service continues to attempt to derive savings from core service activities in an attempt to achieve a balanced position within this area of the service. The delivery of these savings will continue to be monitored in 2025-26.
- 2.95** For context, the overspend seen at year end arose in the landscape of the greater than budgeted pay award for 2024-25, and an increase in demand for regulatory services, in particular those delivered on an authority specific basis.
- 2.96** A full breakdown of the outturn position is shown in **Appendix 3**.

Authority Specific Services

- 2.97** The approved gross budget of £2.693m in respect of Authority Specific (AS) Services has an unaudited overspend of £167k, as detailed in the following table:

Table 2

Authority	Gross	Forecast	Outturn
	Budget	Outturn	Variance
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	463	412	51
Cardiff	1,664	1,866	(202)
Vale	566	582	(16)
Total AS Services	2,693	2,860	(167)

Bridgend

- 2.98** The unaudited outturn position in Bridgend is a total underspend of £51k, this culminates from a closing on-budget or underspend within each of Bridgend's authority specific services. The licensing function was underspent by £40k; due to movement seen within the team during the year which leaves some roles vacant for a period of the year. Additionally Empty Homes is reporting as on budget and Kennelling and Vets has an underspend of £11k this is consistent with activity levels noted in previous years when accounting for the saving taken from this service area in the 24/25 budget setting.

Cardiff

- 2.99** The £202k overspend at Cardiff predominantly relates to the £179k overspend within the Licensing Section which is consistent with performance in previous years.
- 2.100** The combined £30k overspend within HMO Cathays and HMO Plasnewydd teams relates to smaller variances within these teams.
- 2.101** The £7k underspend within Night-Time Noise relates to a marginal decrease in demand due to a decrease in service usage.

Vale

- 2.102** Overall, the Vale has an aggregate £16k overspend.
- 2.103** The increased use of services for Licensing and burials has resulted in a £10k reported overspend in each of these areas.
- 2.104** Pest control is close to reporting an on-budget position with a total overspend of £2k.
- 2.105** Kennelling and Vets are forecasting a £6k underspend, which is consistent with performance in previous years.

Core Services

- 2.106** The approved Core Services Budget for 2024/25 is £6.120m, which as at 31st March 2025 has an outturn overspend of £62k. The Core Service's budget is allocated in line with the information included in the Revenue support grant published by Welsh government, across the participating authorities, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 3

Authority	%	Gross Budget	Forecast	Outturn
		£'000's	Outturn	Variance
		£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	23.75%	1,454	1,468	(14)
Cardiff	57.00%	3,488	3,525	(37)
Vale	19.25%	1,178	1,189	(11)
Total Core		6,120	6,182	(62)

- 2.107** The £20k underspend within Animal Services is due to a staffing vacancy that arose in the year. This was one of the vacant posts subsequently deleted to achieve budget savings ahead of the 2025-26 financial year. As in the previous year some expenditure

relating to supporting animal welfare seizures has been incurred, however levels are far lower than those incurred in the previous financial year.

- 2.108** Environmental Services is reporting an overspend of £20k, which is made up of smaller variances forecasted within this heading.
- 2.109** The Food Services outturn position is an £11k underspend. As noted in previous quarters of this financial year the food services area had been forecasted to be overspent in order to achieve as much of the food programme as possible (including through the use of contractors due to there being a food officer shortfall of 6.5 FTE). By year end however, these pressures had alleviated to some extent, resulting in this modest underspend.
- 2.110** Housing Services outturn position is an overspend of £100k. This overspend is due to a number of reasons, an element of this is attributable to additional salary expenditure which is the result of the impact of the agreed 2024/25 pay award against the available budget along with additional staffing needed to meet service area demands. A previous source of income of £20k per year has also now ceased in year.
- 2.111** The Health & Safety and Communicable Disease budget heading comprises three cost centres spread across two SRS teams. A £3k overspend is reported at year end.
- 2.112** Pollution Services are currently reporting a £14k overspend for the year, this overspend relates to a number of smaller variances across this service area.
- 2.113** The 'Trading Standards' budget comprises a number of cost centres spread across three different SRS teams and also includes an element of the Food service (separate to that outlined in 2.109 above). This area of the budget saw a £44k underspend for the year, this was primarily driven by a better-than-expected interest income from the host authority.

Reserves

- 2.114** The Shared Regulatory Service has built up some reserves which can be utilised to fund planned investment in service expenditure but also emerging pressures within the service.
- 2.115** There have been no drawdowns from the reserves in 24/25 with the exception of the recovery of the 23/24 Outturn and the ringfenced Home Office offensive weapons grant income.

Table 4

Opening Balance	23/24 Recovery	Transfer to Reserves	Transfer to Reserves	Forecast Balance
01/04/24				31/03/25

Reserve	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
SRS General Fund Reserve	494	104	0	(229)	369
Ringfenced Grant Reserve	0	88	0	0	88
Capital Receipts	17	0	0	0	17
POCA Reserves	24	0	7	0	31
Total Usable Reserves	535	192	7	87	505

Challenges moving forward

2.116 Since its inception, SRS has consolidated service delivery in accord with the agreed standards. The over-riding challenges during 2025-26 will be around recruitment and retention, tackling the remaining backlogs in programmed work, the need to address emerging global, national, regional, and local events, and all the while working within a reduced resource. Consequently, the Key Milestones for 2025-26 include:

- *Delivery of the SRS Business Plan 2025-26 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. Examples include the newly launched Special Procedures regime; Single-use Plastics and Single-use Vape ban requirements; legislative changes arising from the Tobacco and Vapes Bill; new rules on the placement of foods high in sugar, fat and salt; and of course, the Welsh Government Building Safety agenda.*
- *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 further develop the 'growing our own' approach, embracing the new Regulatory Apprenticeship for Wales, as part of the wider recruitment and retention strategy.*
- *In light of the continued pressures on public sector budgets, further explore, implement and maximise opportunities for income generation and cost recovery.*
- *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 report outlines achievements in 2024-25 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 2024- 2025
- Appendix 2 – SRS Prosecution Statistics 2024-2025
- Appendix 3 – 2024-2025 SRS Provisional Outturn Position

Shared Regulatory Services

Quarterly Performance Report 2024-25

Quarter 4



Gwasanaethau
Rheoliadol
a Rennir



High Risk Food Hygiene Inspections

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	50	50	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	160	160	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	66	66	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	276	276	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%

High Risk Food Hygiene Inspections

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	296	296	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	712	712	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	291	291	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	1299	1299	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	90%

New Businesses—Food Hygiene

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	188	200	94.00%	Green	Target exceeded. Results for Qtr 4 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	547	567	96.47%	Green	Target exceeded. Results for Qtr 4 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	192	217	88.48%	Amber	Results for Qtr 4 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	927	984	94.21%	Green	Target exceeded. Results for Qtr 4 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	90%

Broadly Compliant Food Premises

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	PAM/23	Qtr 4	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	1289	1315	98.02%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%
2024-25	Cardiff	PAM/23	Qtr 4	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	3219	3360	95.80%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	PAM/23	Qtr 4	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	1234	1265	97.55%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%
2024-25	SRS	PAM/23	Qtr 4	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	5742	5940	96.67%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%

High Risk Trading Standards Inspections

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	8	8	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	17	17	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	4	4	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	29	29	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%

New business—Trading Standards

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	211	228	92.54%	Green	Target exceeded. Results for Qtr 4 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	80%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	676	805	83.98%	Green	Target exceeded. Results for Qtr 4 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	80%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	245	288	85.07%	Green	Target exceeded. Results for Qtr 4 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	80%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	1132	1321	85.69%	Green	Target exceeded. Results for Qtr 4 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	80%

Significant breaches — Trading Standards

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/TS/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of significant breaches that were rectified by intervention during the year for: Trading Standards	33	33	100.00%	Green	This measure relates to premises/businesses that are subject to ongoing investigations. The conclusion of such investigations may not always be possible within the financial year, however all cases are in within time for legal processing.	N/A
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/TS/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of significant breaches that were rectified by intervention during the year for: Trading Standards	146	172	84.88%	Green	This measure relates to premises/businesses that are subject to ongoing investigations. The conclusion of such investigations may not always be possible within the financial year, however all cases are in within time for legal processing.	N/A
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/TS/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of significant breaches that were rectified by intervention during the year for: Trading Standards	42	44	95.45%	Green	This measure relates to premises/businesses that are subject to ongoing investigations. The conclusion of such investigations may not always be possible within the financial year, however all cases are in within time for legal processing.	N/A
2024-25	SRS	SRS/TS/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of significant breaches that were rectified by intervention during the year for: Trading Standards	221	249	88.76%	Green	This measure relates to premises/businesses that are subject to ongoing investigations. The conclusion of such investigations may not always be possible within the financial year, however all cases are in within time for legal processing.	N/A

Noise and Air Pollution

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. re- sponded to within tar- get	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 4	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	99	103	96.12%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/008	Annual Result	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	445	480	92.71%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 4	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	313	318	98.43%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/008	Annual Result	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	1458	1555	93.76%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 4	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	59	60	98.33%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/008	Annual Result	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	335	353	94.90%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 4	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	471	481	97.92%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/008	Annual Result	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	2238	2388	93.72%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%

Noise and Air Pollution

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. re- sponded to within tar- get	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 4	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	34	53	64.15%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 6 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day. This was largely due to other work commitments and lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/009	Annual Result	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	160	222	72.07%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 7 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day during the year. This was largely due to other work commitments and lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 4	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	65	90	72.22%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 3 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day. This was largely due to lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/009	Annual Result	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	347	519	66.86%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 43 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day during the year. This was largely due to lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 4	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	29	36	80.56%	Green	Target exceeded.	75%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/009	Annual Result	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	156	215	72.56%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 6 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day during the year. This was largely due to lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 4	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	128	179	71.51%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 7 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day. This was largely due to lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/009	Annual Result	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	663	956	69.35%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 54 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day during the year. This was largely due to lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%

Noise and Air Pollution

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. re- sponded to within tar- get	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 4	Percentage of alarm complaints re- sponded to within one day.	1	1	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/010	Annual Result	Percentage of alarm complaints re- sponded to within one day.	10	11	90.91%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 4	Percentage of alarm complaints re- sponded to within one day.	15	15	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/010	Annual Result	Percentage of alarm complaints re- sponded to within one day.	69	76	90.79%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 4	Percentage of alarm complaints re- sponded to within one day.	0	0	0.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/010	Annual Result	Percentage of alarm complaints re- sponded to within one day.	5	5	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 4	Percentage of alarm complaints re- sponded to within one day.	16	16	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/010	Annual Result	Percentage of alarm complaints re- sponded to within one day.	84	92	91.30%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%

Licensing

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. received	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	32	32	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/004	Annual Result	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	152	152	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	130	130	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/004	Annual Result	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	536	537	99.81%	Green	Whilst one application was not determined within the required 2 months, this was at the request of the applicant who requested the application be deferred due to extenuating circumstances.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	39	39	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/004	Annual Result	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	167	167	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	201	201	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/004	Annual Result	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	855	856	99.88%	Green	Target achieved.	100%

Licensing

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. received	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	9	9	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/005	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	62	62	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	47	47	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/005	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	206	206	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	23	23	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/005	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	68	68	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	79	79	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/005	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	336	336	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%

Licensing

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. received	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 4	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/006	Annual Result	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 4	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/006	Annual Result	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	3	3	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 4	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/006	Annual Result	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 4	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/006	Annual Result	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	3	3	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. improved to an E or above EPC	No of properties where engagement has taken place with landlord	Percentage achieved	Column1	Column2	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	70	150	46.67%	Green	<p>During the year engagement has taken place with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC in place which to date has resulted in a further 70 EPCs being validated rated C to E. Previous engagement with landlords of properties identified as having F and G ratings which are now rated B to E has resulted in an approximate total reduction in CO2 of 217.4 tonnes and 222568 kWh of energy across the 56 properties that responded to our engagement since 2023/24.</p> <p>In terms of enforcement activity officers are currently in the process of preparing penalty charge notices for those landlords that have not complied with the compliance notices served during Qtr 3.</p>	50
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	202	308	65.58%	Green	<p>During the year engagement has taken place with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC in place which to date has resulted in a further 202 EPCs being validated rated C to E. Previous engagement with landlords of properties identified as having F and G ratings which are now rated B to E has resulted in an approximate total reduction in CO2 of 105.1 tonnes and 128071 kWh of energy across the 56 properties that responded to our engagement since 2023/24.</p> <p>In terms of enforcement activity officers are currently in the process of preparing penalty charge notices for those landlords that have not complied with the compliance notices served during Qtr 3.</p>	100
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	93	152	61.18%	Green	<p>During the year engagement has taken place with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC in place which to date has resulted in a further 93 EPCs being validated rated C to E. Previous engagement with landlords of properties identified as having F and G ratings which are now rated B to E has resulted in an approximate total reduction in CO2 of 134 tonnes and 132459 kWh of energy across the 52 properties that responded to our engagement since 2023/24.</p> <p>In terms of enforcement activity officers are currently in the process of preparing penalty charge notices for those landlords that have not complied with the compliance notices served during Qtr 3.</p>	50
2024-25	SRS	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	365	610	59.84%	Green	<p>During the year engagement has taken place with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC in place which to date has resulted in a further 365 EPCs being validated rated C to E across the region. Previous engagement with landlords of properties identified as having F and G ratings which are now rated B to E has resulted in an approximate total reduction in CO2 of 456.5 tonnes and 483098 kWh of energy across the 164 properties that responded to our engagement since 2023/24 across the SRS region.</p> <p>In terms of enforcement activity officers are currently in the process of preparing penalty charge notices for those landlords that have not complied with the compliance notices served during Qtr 3.</p>	200

Prosecutions

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. of prosecutions cases in court	No. concluded successfully	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Column1	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	2	2	100.00%	Green	No further prosecutions were concluded during Qtr 4 bringing the total for the year to 2. These included a rogue builder case, the details of which were highlighted in Qtr 2, and a licensing case reported in Qtr 3.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	27	27	100.00%	Green	A further 11 cases were successfully concluded in Cardiff during Qtr 4, bringing the total for the year to 27. Of these, 2 related to private sector housing, 2 pollution, 2 licensing, 3 food hygiene and one relating to food labelling and the sale of illegal vapes and another relating to animal welfare. One significant food hygiene case resulted in combined fines against a company and 2 defendants totalling £19,360. In this case officers found such poor standards of food safety when they inspected a Cardiff restaurant, that a food hygiene rating of zero was awarded. In addition to cleanliness issues, dangerously long date markings were being given to prepared food and a total of 3 active pest infestations were identified (mice and cockroaches in various locations, and book lice living in the spices). As a result of these findings, the premises voluntarily closed for cleaning and pest elimination and proofing. The defendants told the District Judge that they took full accountability for the offences and had learnt a valuable lesson going forward.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	2	2	100.00%	Green	No further prosecutions were concluded during Qtr 4 bringing the total for the year to 2. These included a rogue trader case, the details of which were highlighted in Qtr 2, and a food hygiene case highlighted in Qtr 3.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	31	31	100.00%	Green	11 cases were successfully concluded during Qtr 4, bringing the total number of cases across the region to 31 during the year. Of these, 2 related to private sector housing, 2 pollution, 2 licensing, 3 food hygiene and one relating to food labelling and the sale of illegal vapes and another animal welfare. Details of some of these cases are outlined above.	100%

Appendix 2 - SRS prosecution cases concluding during 2024-25

Case	Court date	Offence(s)	Outcome
1	14.6.24	<p>The case against the 11 defendants was heard across two Crown Court trials that took place in November/December 2023 and February/March 2024.</p> <p>This was an extremely determined organised criminal group set up and run to sell illegal tobacco and nitrous oxide, predominantly in the Cardiff, Barry and Bridgend areas. It was extremely lucrative, and premises were taking more than £1,000. There were at least 8 shops involved and a number of other premises and locations used to support the illegality. Most of the business was conducted in cash. Those involved, particularly in a senior role, displayed a complete disregard for the law and knowingly continued to trade despite previous advice, intervention, and court proceedings.</p> <p>Searches and test purchases in the case resulted in over £600,000 worth of unlawful tobacco product being recovered. This is a mere fraction of the criminality as this figure does not take into account a single cigarette actually sold to members of the public. More than £1,800,000 was laundered through various bank accounts. Cash was banked only when it had to be, to pay expenses. The Organised Crime Group had a simple modus operandi. It would open small shops which appeared to sell general produce. Most of the premises were linked to corporate entities, the directorship and ownership of which frequently</p>	<p>A number of defendants changed their pleas to 'guilty' during the course of the two trials and the remainder were found guilty by the respective juries.</p> <p>In sentencing, the Judge concluded that the defendants were part of an organised criminal group that established and ran 8 shops selling illegal tobacco and nitrous oxide canisters. The victims of the crime were the state in the form of the Exchequer, the brand holders and other legitimate businesses in competition locally. The public were sold sub-standard products and there were vulnerable victims where individual cigarettes were sold to underage children. The selling of nitrous oxide was potentially dangerous as it could be misused. He gave limited credit where appropriate for those who entered guilty pleas.</p> <p>The sentences imposed were as follows:-</p> <p>Defendant 1: 7 years imprisonment</p> <p>Defendant 2: 6 years imprisonment</p> <p>Defendant 3: 3 years imprisonment</p> <p>Defendant 4: 6 years imprisonment</p> <p>Defendant 5: 2 year sentence, suspended for 18</p>

	<p>changed. False directors would often be inserted in name only and receive a fee for being the apparent 'face' of the business, some of which did not live in the South Wales area at all. On occasion, employees were used as directors but would have no real control over the business. The premises would sell largely long-life ambient goods to masquerade as legitimate stores when in fact the principal trade would be in illegal tobacco products and illegal nitrous oxide canisters.</p> <p>Most of the employees in the shops were failed asylum seekers who were not permitted to work in the UK and received cash for their employment. They were rarely named on any documents. They were also circulated between the shops which made it difficult to identify and trace them. They often used several variations of their names and dates of birth. To some extent these individuals were exploited by those at the top of the organisation.</p> <p>As the criminality continued, increased efforts were made to avoid detection. Most of the shops had large, concealed spaces held shut with powerful electrical magnets, which could only be opened by a remote control. The illicit tobacco products were often hidden in these spaces which could not be accessed without the remote control. The compartments were concealed and could not be seen with the naked eye. The spaces could only be identified by sniffer dogs and/or by breaking down the walls. Other systems such as an electronic winch and tables with hidden compartments were also found.</p>	<p>months with a 20 day rehabilitation requirement</p> <p>Defendant 6: 19 month sentence, suspended for 12 months with 150 hours unpaid work and a 10 day rehabilitation requirement</p> <p>Defendant 7: 2 year sentence, suspended for 12 months with 150 hours unpaid work and a 10 day rehabilitation requirement</p> <p>Defendant 8: 3 years imprisonment</p> <p>Defendant 9: 19 month sentence, suspended for 12 months with 100 hours unpaid work and a 10 day rehabilitation requirement</p> <p>Defendant 10: 2 year sentence, suspended for 12 months with 100 hours unpaid work and a 10 day rehabilitation requirement</p> <p>Defendant 11: 28 months imprisonment</p> <p><u>Making a total of:</u></p> <p>27 years and 4 months in immediate imprisonment, and</p> <p>9 years and 2 months in suspended sentences.</p>
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2	16.5.24	<p>In September 2022, a complaint was received about an unregistered food business in Cardiff running an event for which the ticket price included karaoke and food. Officers</p>	<p>The defendant was fined £1,350 for each of the first two offences giving a total fine of £2,700 (there was no separate fine for the other offences).</p>

	<p>had previously been concerned that the business may be engaging activities that would require it to be registered and had given appropriate advice.</p> <p>At the time of the Officers' evening visit to the premises, the kitchen was being used for the commercial preparation of food, despite the business not being registered. Officers found the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No Food Safety Management system in place• Cats roaming freely along the kitchen surfaces• A strong smell of urine and cat faeces in adjacent rooms• A toilet opening directly onto the kitchen• Out of date food• Poor cleanliness throughout <p>As a result of the kitchen being an imminent risk to health and food soon to be served to the public, a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition notice was served, and a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order was later granted by the Court.</p> <p>The defendant was subsequently charged with a number of food hygiene offences, and the Judge took the view that case involved very high culpability and harm.</p>	<p>Partial costs of £1000 were ordered and he was also required to pay a victim surcharge of £1080.</p>
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3.	12.7.24	<p>This case arose after an employee was seriously injured when a heavy gate fell onto her as she assisted a colleague in opening up one morning as they arrived at the Cardiff premises. The injuries sustained by the employee have been life changing and she has been affected physically, mentally and financially as a result.</p> <p>During the course of the investigation, it became apparent that two linked companies (one being the employer and the other the landlord) shared responsibility for maintenance of the gate. Officers from Shared Regulatory Services attended the premises and discovered that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No risk assessments for the security gates had been completed and hazards associated with employees and non-employees coming into contact with the security gates as part of their day to day activities had not been considered. • There had been no routine inspection or maintenance programme in place for the security gates on or before the date of the accident • Staff with health and safety responsibilities had received no instruction or training to be competent to undertake their roles. • Health and safety issues appeared to be dealt with on a reactive basis. • The employer considered the yard and security gates to be the responsibility of the landlord with regards to all repair and maintenance. 	<p>The first defendant company was fined a total of £45,000, and ordered to pay costs of £11397.15 and a court charge of £170.</p> <p>The second defendant company was fined a total of £12,000, ordered to pay costs of £11397.15 and a court charge of £170.</p> <p>Making a total fine £57,000 and total costs of 22,794.30</p>
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		<p>had been a clear history with the gate and these matters could have been picked up with regular inspections. The company fell far short of the appropriate standard by failing to put any measures in place, by failing to carry out any risk assessments or inspections despite numerous reports of the gates failing and this should have been a red flag. This was an accident waiting to happen and this 180kg gate was likely to fail when a person was near/using it. The victim's injuries were serious. This was a category 3 harm and actual harm was caused. He accepted that both defendants had no previous convictions and there had been no further incidences.</p>	
4.	12.7.24	<p>This case concerned a 2 storey Victorian terraced house in Cathays, Cardiff which was occupied by 4 un-related students. The property was properly licensed to the previous owner, but was purchased by the current owner, a limited company in December 2021.</p> <p>Despite SRS sending several letters to the owner, no application was made to obtain a licence under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004, nor under the Additional HMO Licensing scheme for Cathays. In addition, the new owner failed to register the property with Rent Smart Wales under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.</p> <p>Nevertheless, Officers visiting the property in August 2023 were able to establish that it was occupied by four people between 01/07/22 to 30/04/23 and then again from 01/07/23. All attempts to engage with the company and its</p>	<p>The company and its Director were each fined £1550, and each was ordered to pay costs of £320.</p> <p>Both were also required to pay a victim surcharge of £616 each.</p>

		<p>Director were met with silence and a prosecution was commenced against the company and its Director.</p> <p>The defendants failed to attend court and the matter was heard in their absence.</p>	
5.	17.7.24	<p>This case arose as a result of a March 2023 inspection of a food business operating as both a restaurant and a takeaway establishment in Grangetown Cardiff. Despite generally poor compliance over a number of years, the Officers' findings during this visit were extremely concerning and cut across a number of areas of food hygiene including cross contamination, record keeping and cleanliness.</p> <p>In addition, a significant and active rat infestation was evident but there was no pest control contract in place. Given the clear risk to human health, Officers secured a voluntary closure while the problems were addressed, and the premises was given a Zero food hygiene rating.</p> <p>Once a pest control contract was in place, the infestation could be addressed, and as part of this work, the technician made use of a UV light-activated dust to be able to monitor ongoing rodent activity. The dust was laid at night and the Food Business Operator was given strict instructions not to disturb the dust in any way, but rather to meet the Officer and the pest control technician outside the premises at a set time the following morning. It was particularly disappointing that the FBO ignored these instructions and took it upon himself to enter the premises and mop the area where the dust had been laid.</p>	<p>The Judge considered the defendant's early guilty pleas and imposed a total fine of £1400. He was also ordered to pay £696 in costs together with a victim surcharge of £600.</p>

		<p>The FBO's actions were viewed as an aggravating factor, i.e., a bid to convince Officers that there had been no further rat activity, meaning that the restaurant could open sooner, and make money sooner, than would otherwise have been the case. The defendant was charged under the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended) in respect of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to ensure that adequate procedures were in place to control pests • Failure to permit good food hygiene practices, including protection against contamination and in particular pest control. • Failure to maintain food premises in good repair, and • Failure to maintain permanent procedures based on HACCP principles. 	
6.	28.8.24	<p>In November 2022, SRS received a number of complaints about the defendant's soft play centre in Cardiff. Several inspections followed, culminating in an improvement notice being issued in March 2023, requiring the business owner to produce suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to the health and safety of both employees and non-employees using, and accessing, the facility. The deadline given in the improvement notice passed without the risk assessments being provided.</p> <p>The court was advised that the business is no longer</p>	<p>Given the defendant's difficult financial circumstances, she was fined £200, ordered to pay costs of £800 and a court surcharge of £80.</p>

		<p>trading, and the defendant now works as a part-time carer She has no intention of ever running a similar business ever again.</p> <p>In sentencing, the District Judge advised the defendant that she could have easily avoided the prosecution by complying with the notice.</p>	
7.	28.8.24	<p>The defendant was selling cosmetic products from his Cardiff premises, that were not intended for the UK market, and which failed to comply with product safety law. Officers initially visited the premises and provided detailed advice on what needed to be done to comply with the law and trade safely.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the advice was ignored and non-compliant product lines continued to be stocked. In June 2023, officers seized a number of products which contained hydroquinone – a substance which is prohibited in cosmetic products. Other products on sale were actually medicinal products which can only be legally sold or supplied to the public through a registered pharmacy premises or by or under the supervision of a pharmacist. In addition, some product lines had no labelling or ingredients list on the packaging.</p> <p>The defendant pleaded guilty to 13 offences under the Cosmetic Products Enforcement Regulations 2013, The Human Medicines Regulations 2012 and the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 in relation to offences committed at the Cardiff premises.</p>	<p>As a result of the defendant's dire financial circumstances, the District Judge fined him a total of £440, ordered him to pay costs of £500 and a court surcharge of £176.</p>

		The court was advised that the business is no longer trading, and the defendant has been struggling with his health and financial circumstances.	
8.	4.9.24	<p>Officers found very poor standards of hygiene at this kebab house / Restaurant in Cardiff. In addition, during one of the revisits to the premises to monitor compliance, a significant and active cockroach infestation of some longstanding was identified which necessitated closure of the premises.</p> <p>While a voluntary closure is often put in place as an agreed means for a food business to resolve food hygiene concerns, Officers were sufficiently concerned by the attitude of the defendants and the extent to which they could be trusted, that they opted instead to issue a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice. This speaks volumes about the response of the defendants to the issues identified. The court later issuing a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order as part of this process.</p> <p>The legal food business operator was a limited company (having one Director), while the individual having the role of manager at the premises was clearly the natural food business operator. Each of the three defendants faced 21 charges under the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations.</p>	<p>Each of the three defendants was fined £100 and ordered to pay costs of £100 and a victim surcharge of £40, making a total of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fines £ 300 • Costs £300 • Victim surcharge £120
9.	18.9.24	This rogue builder case resulted from an SRS investigation that established how the individual's trading practices resulted in significant financial loss to multiple customers, amounting to over £200,000. As well as the financial loss, the residents suffered months of distress as they fought to get their home improvement projects completed or to get	The defendant was sentenced to an immediate custodial sentence of 5 years, discounted as there were no previous convictions, meaning that he would serve a total of 43 months (3 years and 7 months). Half the sentence to be served in prison and half on licence.

their money refunded.

When the Bridgend county borough-based rogue trader first came to the attention of the Service, attempts were made to engage with him to provide advice, information and to seek an undertaking as to future conduct under the Enterprise Act. As the extent of his wrongdoing became apparent however a full criminal investigation ensued.

Presenting himself as a competent businessman, the truth behind that image was quite different. The builder engaged in misleading and fraudulent trading practices in his dealings with customers, and using classic rogue trader practices, he 'robbed Peter to pay Paul' by continuing to take money from new clients in order to do at least some work for existing customers. Using a string of trading names, he created a web of deceit, including starting a new company when one went into liquidation and later using a completely different trading name to distance himself from the growing number of poor Trustpilot reviews being left by customers.

The witness statements in this case illustrate in detail the misery brought on the residents over many months, through for example jobs started and not finished, goods not ordered despite specific payments having been made to him, poor workmanship, and failure to obtain necessary Planning and Building Control consents. He relied on a façade of stock images from Pinterest and other websites and passed them off as examples of his company's previous work.

		<p>Of particular concern was the fact that he coerced customers and manipulated situations to convince them that they would have their money back if they took down negative reviews and, withdrew their participation in an investigation by BBC X-Ray.</p> <p>The defendant finally pleaded guilty to 11 counts of fraud, 1 count of fraudulent trading and 1 count of unfair commercial practice.</p> <p>In sentencing, the Judge reflected on the Victim Impact Statements and highlighted recurring themes within them, including that the victims initially felt impressed with Mr Atkinson and his work, which was soon followed by feelings of betrayal and detrimental effects to the financial and emotional wellbeing of all victims.</p> <p>Dates have been set for the Proceeds of Crime investigation and it is hoped that the residents affected will receive compensation for their losses through this route.</p>	
10.	30.9.24	<p>The Vale of Glamorgan based defendant contracted with residents to undertake landscaping works. The customers had been taken in by the competitive prices quoted and by the almost immediate start dates offered, but things took a familiar turn when the cost of the jobs spiralled, in one case to more than £20,000. Multiple excuses were given for the increasing price, and for the poor progress of work, including inflation and the cost of materials. The defendant also cited various personal challenges including the death of his own mother (who, it was established, was alive and</p>	<p>The defendant was given an immediate custodial sentence of 9 months.</p>

		<p>well).</p> <p>He pleaded guilty under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falsely claiming photographs provided to consumers were examples of work done by the business • Failing to provide goods/and or services for which the business had received payment • Undertaking work in respect of which the business did not have the skill or experience to complete • Conducting work to a poor standard • Failing to complete work • Requesting more money than initially quoted • Claiming additional amounts from consumers on a false basis • Coercing consumers to pay further money • Requesting payments to be made into third party bank accounts <p>In sentencing, the Judge considered the early guilty plea entered by the defendant.</p>	
11.	22.10.24	<p>The defendant in this case is the freeholder of a three storey property in Cardiff which had been sub-divided into 4 self-contained flats. When in 2019 she was granted a licence for the property under part 2 of the Housing Act 2004, conditions required certain works to be completed within 3 months of issue, The repairs and improvements were needed in order to protect the health, safety and</p>	<p>The defendant was fined a total of £850 for each of the four offences, giving a total fine of £3,400. She was ordered to pay costs of £2,800 as well as a victim surcharge of £1,350.</p>

	<p>welfare of the tenants.</p> <p>The licence also included restrictions on the number of persons permitted to occupy each of the flats. However, when SRS officers visited the address in 2023, they established that the works required by the conditions of the licence had not been completed. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• overhauling fire doors and confirming the structural fire integrity of partitions• adequately fire protecting the electricity meter and consumer unit cupboards• provision of adequate kitchens• repair or replacement of extractor fans• provision of adequate numbers of electrical sockets• adequate security to the property• the presence of damp• eliminating risks of falls. <p>Improvement notices were served requiring the necessary works to be completed by the end of June 2023. Nevertheless, subsequent visits to the property confirmed that the works required by the notices had still not been completed. The defendant was charged with four offences to which she subsequently pleaded guilty.</p> <p>In sentencing, the District Judge said that the defendant's management of the property and her communication with</p>	
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		the Council had been wholly unsatisfactory.	
12.	7.11.24	<p>In this case, a Cardiff resident had needed work done to the chimney breast at her home and engaged the trader to carry out the work. Once the work started, the trader advised that the damp problem was far worse than the surveyor had indicated, and the roof would work too. Despite claiming to be a 'general builder', the trader was a carpenter by trade. Very little work was done at the property despite more than £26,000 being taken.</p> <p>The victim never received a contract, or details of her cancellation rights, and wasn't given a breakdown of the tasks and costs involved in the work.</p> <p>After many months, the work still wasn't done, yet the resident was not given a refund by the trader. Instead, when questioned, he sought to shift blame on to her for the lack of progress on the job.</p> <p>During the time that the case progressed through the court process, the trader had said that he would repay the victim, yet at the point of sentencing, he had failed to do so.</p> <p>Powerful victim impact statements were then read out in court to illustrate the impact of the trader's actions on the victim and her family. The aggravating factors of the case were length of time over which the fraudulent behaviour was carried out, the breach of trust that occurred, the sum taken from the victim and the fact that the trader was seen to have targeted the vulnerable.</p>	<p>The Judge concluded that the defendant would be sentenced to 27 months imprisonment. This sentence is one of 3 years, reduced by 25% due to the defendant's early plea.</p> <p>It is hoped that victim compensation will flow from the Proceeds of Crime investigation, linked to the case.</p>

		<p>The Judge summarised the impact of his actions stating that he took victims 'for a ride', 'preyed on their insecurity, talked them down and persuaded them' to give him money for his fraudulent services.</p>	
13.	22.11.24	<p>This case arose as a result of the poor living conditions in which tenants were living in a 2 storey Cardiff property which had been converted into self-contained flats.</p> <p>The landlord of the property had allowed a range of failings to continue in the flats over a period of time, resulting in the tenants of both flats living in squalid and unsafe conditions. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to ensure that the means of escape is in good order • Failure to maintain the fire alarm system • Failure to fire protect the electricity meters • Defective elements in the electrical installation • Failure to ensure that the internal structure is maintained in good working repair • Failure to maintain kitchen work surfaces • Failure to maintain the bathroom facilities • Failure to ensure that every window and other means of ventilation are kept in good repair • Failure to ensure sufficient bins are provided. 	<p>The defendant was fined a total of £3,378 and ordered to pay £650 costs together with a surcharge of £1351.</p>

		<p>The landlord was issued with notices under the Housing Act 2004 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, but he failed to comply, and the required information was not forthcoming. It was a cause of concern that he had been prosecuted for failings at the same property back in 2018. This suggested that he was fully aware of his responsibilities but chose not to honour them.</p> <p>The landlord pleases guilty to all offences which the magistrates separated into 3 categories, namely fire safety related offences, general maintenance/repair offences and failure to provide the required documentation.</p>	
14.	28.11.24	<p>The defendant is a private hire operator who knowingly recruited an unlicensed taxi driver to do airport pick up runs. The driver was stopped during a spot check by Police at Bristol airport, and when questioned by SRS Officers, the private hire operator tried to blame others for the offences, claiming that he had been told this was acceptable. It became clear at interview that the operator was more concerned about how smart and presentable a driver was than whether they were licensed and subject to the DBS check.</p> <p>The defendant pleaded to two offences, namely being a proprietor:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allowing an unlicensed driver to drive a vehicle, and 2. Operating an uninsured vehicle. 	The defendant was fined £241.00 for each of the two offences to give a total fine of £481, and was ordered to pay costs of £250, together with a victim surcharge of £191.
15.	10.12.24	In April 2024, a sixteen-year-old volunteer was served with a SKE Fizzy Cherry nicotine inhaling product (vape) at this	The Judge ordered each defendant to pay a fine of £320, together with cost of £284 and £128 victim

		<p>Cardiff store. The illegal sale took place as part of a Trading Standards test purchase exercise which was prompted by complaints, or other intelligence, alleging that people under the age of 18 were able to purchase vapes at the store.</p> <p>This was not the first time the store failed a test purchase attempt for vapes – underage sales made previously resulted in an informal warning letter in respect of a December 2022 illegal sale, and in prosecution in respect of the July 2023 underage sale that followed. Throughout this time, SRS officers provided the business with detailed advice on compliance with underage sales law.</p> <p>The case was brought against the limited company running the store, its sole Director, and also her husband who was acting in the capacity of the store manager.</p>	<p>surcharge.</p> <p>It was made clear to the defendants that they must take more care as this was not a mistake but a crime. If they continue to offend, the Judge will have no hesitation in continuing to double each fine they receive.</p>
16.	10.12.24	<p>This case arose as a result of the food hygiene failings identified during a number of inspections of a mobile catering vehicle operating in the Vale of Glamorgan. During the initial visit to the food truck in a popular seaside location, the inspecting Environmental Health Officer issued a Remedial Action Notice (RAN) in respect of food being stored in a broken-down fridge. The items of food, which included meat and fish, were meant to be kept chilled (at a temperature of less than 8°C) but were being stored in the fridge at temperatures between 17.5°C and 19.6°C.</p> <p>A string of other failings was identified during a follow up visit in May 2023, and these cut across multiple aspects of food safety (including cleanliness, unsafe food storage, and lack of training for staff) indicating a disregard for the</p>	<p>The Judge fined the company Director £334, and the company £50 (seemingly on the grounds that it had not been trading for some time). The Director was ordered to pay prosecution costs totalling £2283.75, but no victim surcharge.</p> <p>The prosecution's request for a Food Hygiene Prohibition Notice was declined by the Judge.</p>

		<p>significant responsibilities associated with running a food business. As a result of the Officer's concerns, a second RAN was issued, this time to prohibit the handling and storage of raw foods.</p> <p>Despite extensive advice and support from the Investigating Officer, the Food Business Operator (a limited company) and its sole Director showed a disregard for the safety of customers, and the seriousness of the failings in this case is reflected in the ZERO Food Hygiene Rating Scheme score awarded to the business as a result.</p> <p>Further visits (both announced and unannounced) took place between June and September 2023, during which multiple food hygiene non-compliances continued to be observed. In addition, failure to display the ZERO food hygiene rating sticker resulted in a fixed penalty notice being issued.</p> <p>The defendant had entered guilty pleas for a total of 17 food hygiene charges. In sentencing, the Judge took into consideration the 'glowing references' for the company Director, the lack of previous convictions and certain personal circumstances that weren't disclosed to the court.</p> <p>The Judge made it clear however that had the defendant's personal circumstances been different, he would have been facing a substantial fine, and this should act as a deterrent for any future offending.</p>	
17.	11.12.24	This case catalogued a series of occasions between March and the end of November 2022, when illegal vapes	The Judge imposed fines totalling £2,000 (which took into account the early guilty pleas). In addition, costs

		<p>(electronic cigarettes) were either supplied, or in possession for supply, to customers at a vape outlet in Cardiff. During the various Officer visits, it became clear that the company running the business, and its sole Director, chose to flout the law by trading in illegal vapes, non-compliant with the requirements of the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations. This was despite the business being issued with detailed guidance on the first occasion. The behaviour of the company and its Director accords with the intelligence received by the Shared Service which indicated that illegal stock was being stored on, and supplied from, the premises.</p> <p>The Judge identified the aggravating factor of the case as being the multiple occasions in which non-compliant e-cigarettes were found on the premises. The defence presented the mitigating factors to be that the Director accepts his wrongdoing (evidenced by his early guilty plea), and the fact that he is experiencing poor mental health.</p>	<p>amounted to £1336, and there was a victim surcharge of £500.</p>
18	17.12.24	<p>The defendant was faced with 13 charges for his offences under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 and the Fraud Act 2006. The court heard how his criminal behaviour involved grossly overcharging for work, exaggerating the severity of the work needing to be done to the victims' properties, advising for work to be done on properties which was not needed in the first place, and any work which was done was of a very poor standard.</p> <p>The defendant's actions also resulted in the victims having to pay high costs for extensive repairs for any work he did</p>	<p>The recorder imposed an immediate custodial sentence of 5 years and one month on the defendant for the offences arising from the residents' properties.</p> <p>In addition, his guilty plea under the Bail Act 1976 for Failure to Surrender also warranted a 1-month concurrent sentence, bringing his overall sentence to 5 years and 2 months, half of which he will serve in prison and half on licence.</p>

		<p>do.</p> <p>The victims were ‘pressured’ and ‘persuaded’ by the defendant, and his seemingly friendly nature meant that they trust him and his advice. However, the victims are now left distressed and with ‘trust issues’ towards any tradespeople. One of the victims, a 93-year-old lady, who had placed her trust in the trader, sadly passed away in 2023. Her son’s Victim Impact Statement told of how she had urged her son not to cancel her agreement with the defendant, or to involve the police as he seemed to be a ‘very nice man’ who would ‘do a good job and give her a fair price’. It is clear that the defendant targeted vulnerable individuals to commit his Fraud, leaving them emotionally, physically and financially burdened.</p> <p>An application for a Criminal Behaviour Order was sought to restrict the defendant’s ability to offer and provide building and home improvement services in the future, and this was granted for a period of 10 years.</p> <p>An application for the Proceeds of Crime Act Inquiry was also introduced to investigate the defendant’s finances, in the hope that recovered monies can be paid to compensate the victims. A timetable for this was set and the mention hearing will be on 29th April 2025.</p>	
19	17.12.24	<p>The investigation in this case arose as a result of a number of complaints received by the Service from neighbours concerned that dog breeding was taking place in ‘inhumane conditions’ at a residential property in Cardiff.</p>	<p>The defendant, who was already serving a prison sentence following another matter, was given a one-month concurrent prison sentence for the Animal Welfare offence and ordered to pay a £154 surcharge</p>

		<p>On arrival at the property, the Investigating Officer was confronted with the dreadful conditions in which dogs were being kept by the unlicensed breeder. A Vet reviewed the wellbeing of the dogs and offences under both section 9 and section 4 of the Animal Welfare Act were established.</p> <p>Sentencing in this case took place at Cardiff Crown Court. The court heard that the defendant had pleaded guilty to causing an animal to suffer contrary to Section 4 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. All dogs had either been voluntarily handed over to the local authority or were subject to successful section 20 proceedings to give ownership of the animals to the Council.</p> <p>An application for a Disqualification Order under the Animal Welfare Act was successful, and this means that the defendant is unable to keep, or be involved in the keeping, of dogs for a period of 6 years.</p>	
20	18.12.24	<p>This case arose following the sale at a Cardiff convenience store of a bottle of Smirnoff Ice to a 16-year-old volunteer. The sale was made during a Trading Standards test purchase operation. SRS had received complaints about the premises, including the suggestion that a young person was apparent hospitalised after they had purchased alcohol from the store.</p> <p>It is disappointing that the volunteer was sold alcohol despite Officers previously giving written and verbal advice to the business on age restricted products and on how to avoid underage sales.</p>	In sentencing, the Court imposed a fine of £461, together with costs of £400 and a surcharge of £184.

		<p>The defendant entered a guilty plea by post, and the court was told that he will make a number of improvements at his retail premises, this to include hiring only experienced staff in future.</p>	
21	3.1.25	<p>The landlord of two Victorian properties, converted into 5 self-contained flats, faced a total of 28 charges for which he entered guilty pleas.</p> <p>Following a complaint made by one of the tenants in November 2023, SRS officers visits were made to the property where it was established multiple failures to comply with the relevant standards for this type of private rented accommodation, namely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no functional fire alarm system of the appropriate type. • Flat entrance doors were defective and/or damaged fire doors. • Gas and electricity meters in the common areas had not been fire protected. • Electrical installations were unsafe. • Kitchen and bathroom facilities were inadequate and/or defective. • The property was not secure against intruders. • There were accumulations likely to harbour rodents in the rear garden and garage. • A drain was missing a cover. • One of the flats included an unacceptable inner room. • Flats did not have adequate heating systems. • There was penetrating damp. 	<p>The defendant was fined a total of £840, and ordered to pay costs of £784, plus a £330 victim surcharge.</p>

		<p>Improvement Notices were served on the defendant in January 2024 under Part 1, Housing Act 2004 were served on Mr. Stewart in January 2024 and required him to carry out the necessary works by 5th April 2024. When Officers returned in may and June to inspect the property it was clear that the Improvement Notices hadn't been complied with.</p> <p>In mitigation, it was claimed that the actions of the tenants had contributed to the awful conditions they were living in.</p>	
22	24.1.25	<p>In this case, a Cardiff Taxi Driver failed to use a hackney carriage taximeter to calculate the fare on a journey. The offence was committed during a 'mystery passenger' exercise organised by SRS Officers with the assistance of Police student volunteers. The statements of the three volunteers describe how the driver agreed to take them to the destination before they entered the vehicle. Once inside the vehicle they observed that the taxi meter wasn't in operation for the fare to be properly calculated, and they describe how during the journey, when asked how much the fare would be, the driver replied 'just a tenner'.</p> <p>The maximum fare that should have been charged (calculated from the Hackney Carriage fare tariff for Cardiff), was £6.34 Comparison of the permitted fare of £6.34 with the £10 fare actually charged by the driver for the 0.91 mile journey equates to a 37% overcharge.</p> <p>In court, the driver pleaded guilty to two charges, taking full</p>	The driver was fined £300 in respect of both charges, £150 prosecution costs and £120 Victim Surcharge.

		responsibility for his actions and explaining in mitigation that it was a momentary lapse in judgement.	
23	28.1.25	<p>Officers found such poor standards of food safety when they inspected a Cardiff restaurant in October 11th 2023, that a Food Hygiene Rating of Zero was awarded, i.e. <i>urgent improvement necessary</i>. In addition to cleanliness issues, dangerously long date markings were being given to prepared food, and a total of three active pest infestations were identified (mice and cockroaches in various locations, and book lice living in the spices). As a result of these findings, the premises were voluntarily closed for cleaning and for both pest elimination and proofing.</p> <p>The defendant company had been the Food Business Operator at the premises since 2019, and since 2021, there was a marked decline in levels of food safety compliance. Despite this deterioration at the premises and despite detailed advice being given on compliance, the food business failed to address the problems. It also became apparent that staff at the premises were aware of at least one live mouse being seen on the premises in the week before the initial Officers' visit, yet this wasn't addressed.</p> <p>Charges were laid against the company as well as its sole Director and the natural Food Business Operator. The defendants told the District Judge that they took full accountability for the offences and had learnt a valuable lesson going forward, they stated they are now compliant with the law when running their business.</p>	<p>For the overarching charge relating to the business not being run safely, the District Judge imposed a fine of £11,000 on the limited company. For the remaining five offences, the company was fined a total of £5500. In addition, it was ordered to pay costs of £462 and a victim surcharge of £2000.</p> <p>The two individuals received equal fines as their income was identical. Each was fined a total of £4180, and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £1672 together with costs of £462.</p> <p>Fines summary</p> <p>Company: £11,000</p> <p>Defendant 1: £ 4,180</p> <p>Defendant 1: £ 4,180</p> <p>TOTAL: £19,360</p>
24	17.2.2025	This investigation identified persistent failings of a Cardiff	The father was fined £150 and ordered to pay costs of

		<p>company in supplying, and having in possession for supply illegal vapes, as well as soft drinks and snacks containing additives not permitted in the UK. Despite the Investigating Officer on a number of occasions providing the company's Director with detailed advice on compliance in both of these areas of regulatory law, he did nothing to stop the offending.</p> <p>While the company's wholesale outlet is based in Cardiff, the impact of its offending was felt much further afield, and the many referrals from other local authorities and the Food Standards Agency demonstrate the breadth of supply of non-compliant goods to third party outlets, as well as the Director's own retail shop (run by a second company). When interviewed under caution about the non-compliant stock, the company Director was unable to give any plausible explanation for allowing the offending to continue, other than to blame staff.</p>	<p>£350, together with a victim surcharge of £60.</p> <p>The daughter was fined £250 and ordered to pay costs of £350, together with a victim surcharge of £100.</p>
25	18.2.25	<p>SRS received fourteen complaints about the keeping of ducks, chickens, geese and cockerels in the garden of a terraced property in Cardiff. Neighbours complained about the nuisance caused by faeces, odour and noise associated with the keeping of large numbers of birds in a small space.</p> <p>In October 2023 notices under the Environmental Protection Act were served on the occupiers of the property requiring the cleaning and disinfection of the birds' living area on a weekly, or more frequent basis, the clearing away of excess food and bedding on a daily basis, and for waste to be stored appropriately.</p>	<p>The father was fined £150 and ordered to pay costs of £350, together with a victim surcharge of £60.</p> <p>The daughter was fined £250 and ordered to pay costs of £350, together with a victim surcharge of £100.</p>

		<p>When further resident complaints followed, it was established that the notices had been breached. When visiting a neighbour's property to carry out their assessment, officers found that the odour from was so overwhelming in that it could be smelt in every room of the neighbour's home. It was clear that the area was not being adequately cleaned and disinfected. Waste was not being stored in sealed containers and further visits revealed no improvement.</p> <p>Proceedings were brought against a father and daughter, the latter confirming to the Court ahead of sentencing that the birds had finally been removed from the property.</p>	
26	20.2.25	<p>A Cardiff Taxi Driver failed to use a hackney carriage taximeter to calculate the fare on a journey. The offence was committed during a 'mystery passenger' exercise organised by SRS Officers. When the passengers gave the driver the destination they wished to be taken to, he told them that the fare would be £10. The taximeter was not activated, despite this being legally required.</p> <p>The maximum fare that should have been charged (calculated from the Hackney Carriage fare tariff for Cardiff), was £6.95. Comparison of the permitted fare of £6.95 with the £10 fare actually charged by the driver equates to a 31% overcharge.</p> <p>In mitigation, the driver submitted that he had a momentary lapse of judgement that resulted in the offences occurring, that he has learnt from this experience and will not repeat</p>	<p>The Magistrates imposed a fine of £40 for each of the two charges, making a total of £80. The defendant was ordered to pay prosecution costs of £150, together with a £32 Victim Surcharge.</p>

		his actions.	
27	6.3.25	<p>This case concerned the very poor conditions in which tenants were living in a two storey House in multiple occupation in Cardiff. The property is configured as bedsits for 5 tenants with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities.</p> <p>Following a tenant complaint, SRS officers gave advice to the landlord and letting agent on compliance with structural separation, security, falls between levels, electrical safety, defective laminate floors and lack of ventilation in a bedroom. However, in 2023 (when a further tenant complaint was received), it became apparent that that much of the work identified as necessary some four years earlier had not been undertaken. Thus, fire doors were incomplete or defective and were fitted with mortice deadlocks, structural fire separation was inadequate, and the fire alarm was defective. Among the other issues identified at the property on that occasion, were inadequate and unsafe kitchen facilities and a cockroach infestation.</p> <p>The landlord used a letting management agent, and it became clear that culpability for the serious failings at the property (and failures to comply with notices under the Housing Act and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act), rested with not only the landlord but the letting agent company and its two directors. Proceedings were brought against all parties, and while the landlord entered guilty pleas, the case against the letting agent company and its two Directors had to be heard in their absence. They were found guilty.</p>	<p>Sentencing in this case was as follows:</p> <p>Landlord</p> <p>Fined £440 and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £176.</p> <p>No costs were awarded.</p> <p>First Director of the management company</p> <p>Fined £13,860 (£660 x 21) and ordered to pay a surcharge of £5544 together with cost of £450</p> <p>Total sum payable: £19854</p> <p>Second Director of the management company</p> <p>Fined £13,860 (£660 x 21) and ordered to pay a surcharge of £5544 together with cost of £450</p> <p>Total sum payable: £19854</p>
28	11.3.25	<p>Following complaints made by neighbours, officers attended a residential property in Cardiff and found six Kangol dogs (a large breed) living in extremely poor conditions. This was the second time in a matter of months</p>	

		<p>that SRS officers attended the property in response to intelligence indicating that illegal dog breeding was taking place. On the previous occasion, it had been necessary to seize a total of 38 dogs and puppies.</p> <p>Given the clear links with illegal breeders previously using the property, the concern of the Service was that an unlicensed dog breeding operation was up and running there again. Fortunately, no puppies were at the property at the time of the more recent visit, and on this occasion none of the bitches were found to be pregnant. Nevertheless, a range of section 4 and section 9 animal welfare offences were identified, and a specialist Veterinary Surgeon catalogued the condition of each of the dogs. In addition, there was a lack of care for the dogs and a complete lack of enrichment of any kind.</p> <p>While not all the dogs at the property were microchipped to the defendant, when interviewed under caution he confirmed that he was the keeper of them all, and he was at the property throughout the time the officers attended at the property and carried out the seizure of the animals.</p> <p>A successful application under section 20 of the Animal Welfare Act resulted in legal ownership of the dogs being given to the Council allowing the them to be rehomed.</p>	
29	12.3.25	<p>When officers conducted a programmed food hygiene inspection of a Cardiff coffee shop, they found very poor conditions and some of the worst practices they had ever seen. The failings identified at the premises cut across multiple aspects of food safety (including cleanliness, food preparation, pest control, putrid waste to the rear of the</p>	<p>The legal Food Business Operator was fined £166 and ordered to pay costs of £360 together with a £264 Victim Surcharge.</p> <p>Likewise, the other defendant in the case was also fined £166 and ordered to pay costs of £360 together</p>

	<p>property, and lack of a food management system), all of which indicated a poor understanding of the responsibilities associated with running a food business.</p> <p>The legal Food Business Operator had held the role since 2022 when the food business was registered. It would appear that some contractual arrangement existed with another individual who took day to day control of the running of the business, in effect the natural food business operator, and both sought to blame each other for the offences identified by officers.</p> <p>Guilty pleas were entered by each defendant to the following offences under the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Failure to keep the food premises clean and maintain it in good repair• Failure to ensure an adequate number of wash basins, suitably located for cleaning hands• Failure to ensure that wash basins were provided with materials for cleaning and hygienically drying hands• Failure to put in place adequate procedure to control pests in that there was a significant fly infestation.• Failure to protect food from contamination as raw	<p>with a £264 Victim Surcharge.</p>
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		<p>foods were being prepared and stored on the same surfaces as ready to eat products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to ensure all equipment that comes into contact with food (including a dirty temperature probe) are effectively cleaned. • Failure to ensure that those working in the food handling area maintain personal cleanliness and where suitable protective clothing. • Failure to implement and maintain a documented Food Safety and Management System based on HACCP principles. <p>In sentencing, the Judge took into consideration the fact that neither defendant had previous convictions and had pleaded guilty however, she considered these to be serious offences. While the Legal Food Business Operator had overall responsibility for the premises, it was clear no food safety practices were in place, that there was poor housekeeping, fly and maggot infestation, and risks of cross contamination with the risk of customers' health being adversely affected.</p>	
30	19.3.25	<p>This investigation arose as a result of a food hygiene inspections of a Cardiff restaurant during which officers found a significant and active rodent (mouse) infestation which was of some longstanding. The Officers' findings were such that the premises were closed by voluntary agreement to allow the necessary cleaning and pest</p>	<p>The limited company was fined a total of £10,000 and ordered to pay costs of £877 together with a victim surcharge of £2000.</p> <p>The company Director was fined a total of £2,000 and ordered to pay costs of £877 together with a victim</p>

	<p>proofing work to be carried out.</p> <p>The legal Food Business Operator at the time of the offences was a limited company, the sole Director of which ran the food business on a day-to-day basis. While Officers took the necessary actions to protect the public from harm, the sole company Director and his staff subjected them to abuse, and it would appear that this was borne of frustration that the voluntary closure agreement meant the business wouldn't be trading / generating income.</p> <p>When interviewed under caution, the Director complained that it was the fault of the Council, in not properly maintaining adjacent land, that had resulted in the mouse infestation at the restaurant. He also explained that his young daughter was unwell at the time in question which necessitated a hospital stay, and he had been unable to give his full attention to the running of the business.</p> <p>The failings identified at the restaurant in September 2023 were not the result of a sudden event at that time however, rather they were the result of a longstanding failure by the business to pest proof the premises. This was clearly documented in the findings of the pest control contractor between November 2022 and August 2023. Time after time, the business was urged to act to pest proof the premises, culminating in the following advice being given in a visit report at the end of August 2023 - <i>'You <u>must</u> block up gaps around outside vents, mice are using this for access, also gaps around inside vents + burrow under upstairs floor'</i></p> <p>In sentencing, the Judge commented on the 'considerable'</p>	surcharge of £500
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		<p>extent of the mouse infestation at the premises, and the defendants' limited efforts to resolve it. Much more should have and could have been done, but it was clear that profit was being put before customer safety. The Judge believed that the custody threshold was passed and warned the company Director that he had neglected his responsibility, and should he stand before the court again, an immediate custodial sentence would be appropriate. However, having taken all submissions into account, the Judge fined both the company and its sole Director.</p>	
31	28.3.25	<p>Officers had witnessed repeated breaches of an abatement notice issued under section 80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 on a limited company, and its Directors, who run a convenience store in Cardiff. This despite Officers having tried over time to work with the business in a bid to address the noise nuisance being caused at a neighbour's property as a result of refrigeration plant equipment operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at the rear of the store.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the business chose repeatedly to ignore the advice that was given. Most notably, they ignored the clear advice that an acoustics consultant needed to be engaged to identify the most appropriate solution, and all the while, the noise nuisance caused to their neighbour has continued. When interviewed under caution, and in dialogue since, the company has pointed out how much the work has cost them to date and how they weren't prepared to cover the cost of an acoustics consultant after their first quote came in at £1900. Their choice not to engage an acoustics</p>	<p>The defendant company was fined £1081 and ordered to pay costs of £700 together with a Victim Surcharge of £432.</p>

		consultant as they were advised, has proved to be false economy.	
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Closure Orders under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Closure order	Date granted	Details	Outcome
1.	11.6.24	<p>The Closure Order on this premises was originally granted on 21st March 2024 for a period of 3 months. The purpose of this application was to extend the Closure Order for a further three months, on the basis of evidence of continuing / risk of continuing criminal conduct.</p> <p>The court was informed all relevant parties had been notified of the hearing and for the avoidance of doubt, a notice had been placed on the shop front regarding the application for an extension.</p>	The application for an extension was granted for a term of an additional 3 months. This means that the Order would run for the maximum period possible of 6 months, and end on 19 th September 2024 at 23:59.
2.	22.11.24	<p>This corner shop had a long history of supplying illegal tobacco and vapes. Despite the very best efforts of officers to bring the business into compliance, the offending continued. The impact on the community was significant as a result of the public travelling to the area specifically to purchase cheap illegal tobacco products and vapes.</p> <p>Local Councillors and partner agencies provided impact</p>	The Magistrates granted the Closure Order for the maximum period of 3 months. As a result, access by all persons is prohibited at all times until 21 st Feb 2025 at 3pm.

		statements as part of the application for the closure order. No one from the business was present in court when the evidence was presented. The Magistrates said that they were satisfied that the criminality was ongoing and that the Order was necessary to prevent criminality from continuing.	
3.	26.11.24	The premises had a long history of criminality and supplying illegal tobacco and vapes. Despite the very best efforts of officers to bring the business into compliance, the offending continued. The impact on the community was significant as a result of the public travelling to the area specifically to purchase cheap illegal tobacco products and vapes. Local Councillors and partner agencies provided impact statements as part of the application for the closure order.	The Magistrates granted the Closure Order for the maximum period of 3 months.

Gross Expenditure Breakdown as of 31st March 2025

Appendix 3

	Bridgend			Cardiff			Vale			Total		
	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance
<u>Authority Specific</u>												
Bridgend Licensing	389	349	40							389	349	40
Bridgend Empty Homes	42	42	0							42	42	0
Vets & Kennelling Fees (Bridgend)	32	21	11							32	21	11
Cardiff Licensing				833	1,012	(179)				833	1,012	(179)
HMO Cathays				222	233	(11)				222	233	(11)
HMO Plasnewydd				309	328	(19)				309	328	(19)
Student Liaison				71	68	3				71	68	3
Night Time Noise				68	61	7				68	61	7
Cardiff Port Health				161	164	(3)				161	164	(3)
Vale Licensing							427	437	(10)	427	437	(10)
Burials							1	11	(10)	1	11	(10)
Pest Control							118	120	(2)	118	120	(2)
Vets & Kennelling Fees (Vale)							20	14	6	20	14	6
<i>Sub total</i>	463	412	51	1,664	1,866	(202)	566	582	(16)	2,693	2,860	(167)
<u>Core Services</u>												
Animal Services	103	99	4	248	236	12	84	80	4	435	415	20
Environmental	56	60	(4)	133	145	(12)	45	49	(4)	234	254	(20)
Food Services	385	382	3	924	918	6	312	310	2	1,621	1,610	11
Housing Services	134	158	(24)	323	380	(57)	109	128	(19)	566	666	(100)
HS & CD	138	139	(1)	330	332	(2)	112	112	0	580	583	(3)
Pollution Services	226	229	(3)	543	551	(8)	183	186	(3)	952	966	(14)
Trading Stds	412	401	11	987	963	24	333	324	9	1,732	1,688	44
<i>Sub total</i>	1,454	1,468	(14)	3,488	3,525	(37)	1,178	1,189	(11)	6,120	6,182	(62)
Gross Expenditure Budget	1,917	1,880	37	5,152	5,391	(239)	1,744	1,771	(27)	8,813	9,042	(229)