

Meeting of:	<b>Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Tuesday, 28 September 2021</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	All Scrutiny Committees
Report Title:	Overview and Update on Shared Regulatory Services
Purpose of Report:	This report provides an update on the work undertaken by the Shared Regulatory Service (SRS)
Report Owner:	Director of Environment and Housing
Responsible Officer:	Head of Shared Regulatory Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	No Elected Members have been consulted. The following officers have been consulted; Assistant Director, Cardiff Council, Head of Legal and Regulatory services, Bridgend County Borough Council
Policy Framework:	This is matter delegated to the Joint Committee
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The report appraises the Committee of the work of the service and progress toward completing the actions contained in the SRS Business Plans.</li> </ul>

## Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:-

1. Consider, note and agree the contents of this report

## Reason for Recommendation

1. The report appraises the Committee of the work of the service and the progress toward completing the actions contained in the SRS Business Plans.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 SRS Business Plans are developed in consultation with stakeholders; they inform and direct the work of the service and contribute toward the corporate priorities of each partner Council. The service has five key aims, namely:

- Improving Health and Wellbeing
- Safeguarding the Vulnerable
- Protecting the Local Environment
- Supporting the Local Economy
- Maximising the use of our resources

This report contains information outlining how the service is working to achieve better outcomes for residents and businesses within the region through a series of different actions and work programmes. The report provides an overview of activities undertaken in the period April to June 2021.

## 2. Key Issues for Consideration

### Human Resources

- 2.1 The sickness absence level at the end of Quarter 1 was 0.76 days per FTE person overall.

	Short Term Days Lost per FTE	Long Term Days Lost per FTE	Total Days lost Per FTE
<b>Q1 2021-22</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>0.44</b>	<b>0.76</b>
Q1 2020-21	0.37	1.34	1.71

When compared with the same time frame in 2020/21, Q1 saw a reduction in the FTE absence figure for SRS. There are no immediate discernible trends in the absence figures represented. These figures compare favourably when viewed in the wider context of comparison against the average sickness rates across the partner Councils.

**2.2** For the last three years, SRS has operated a match funding programme to allow SRS officers to pursue courses of study that are not necessarily required by their role, but offer the individual an opportunity to develop new skills that are synchronous with the overall aims of the service. These programmes of study have been very successful with a number of officers obtaining new qualifications and in some instances being promoted to more senior roles. That process has continued this year and SRS is supporting three more officers to pursue further studies.

**2.3** The last quarter has also seen the departure of a number of officers from the SRS to pursue positions with other employers. Those officers have performed extremely well during their time with SRS and it will take a little time to deal with the loss of expertise. On more positive note, Councillors will recall that SRS recruited a number of students to assist with the challenges posed by the Coronavirus outbreak. A number of those students have now joined the permanent establishment in our Housing, Licensing and Communicable Disease teams.

#### **Financial Position Quarter 1**

**2.4** The financial monitoring report for the period 1st April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 is attached at **Appendix 1**. It has been prepared from the consolidated figures gathered from each Authority for this period. The Service is forecasting an outturn position of a £143k overspend against the 2021/22 gross revenue budget. This position is due to horse accommodation costs in Q1. Elected members are to be asked to approve the use of the 2020/21 underspend to address this issue as part of the audited accounts report to be tabled at the Committee.

#### **Performance Monitoring**

**2.5** Joint Committee members are provided with data on activity levels to help reassure local members at each council that SRS activity continues to tackle issues across the region. Performance data for quarter 1 of 2021-22 is set out at **Appendix 2** and is reported to each Council in line with the legacy performance management regimes and existing service plans. A presentation on the Q1 performance contained in Appendix 2 will be provided at the Joint Committee meeting. In addition, **Appendix 3** gives a flavour of the broad range of COVID related enforcement and advice work carried out by SRS during Q1 as the controls on the economy and society movements were relaxed. The Service updates below provide more detail and context for the Joint Committee on some of the key areas of this work.

## *COVID 19 related work*

- 2.6** In May 2021, the Welsh Government began to relax some of the Coronavirus restrictions that had been in place since Christmas 2020. Wales moved from Alert level 4 to Alert level 2 in a phased approach to reopening the economy and allowing more social interaction between households. This gradual lifting of restrictions reflected the fact that the virus was still in general circulation, but the vaccine programme was beginning to have an impact. There was a clear reduction in the number of people becoming severely unwell and the infection rate generally was beginning to fall. However, all this was being done at a time when the impact of the new Delta strain of the virus was uncertain.
- 2.7** May 2021 also saw the introduction of “*test events*” at Cardiff Castle and other venues across Wales. These gatherings were sanctioned on the understanding that the organisers and public health authorities would develop safe processes that would enable larger events to take place as restrictions were relaxed further. The events were held successfully and no significant incidence of coronavirus were associated with the test events.
- 2.8** Later in May 2021, international travel resumed for *essential purposes* under a traffic light system. People returning from countries classified as red or amber needed to follow isolation and testing rules. Unfortunately the guidance outlining what constituted an *essential purpose* was not particularly robust and many people travelled to amber and red list countries, particularly India. This brought additional work for the Test, Trace and Protect service (TTP) and the SRS/Police JET teams who were tasked with ensuring that returning travellers followed the isolation requirements. Many did, but a small number did not and Cardiff in particular saw an early introduction of the Delta variant.
- 2.9** In June 2021, the Welsh Government announced a phased move to Alert level 1. The phased approach was a recognition that despite increased transmission due to the rapid spread of the Delta variant, this strain did not generate the more severe symptoms associated with the earlier variants. Consequently, Alert level 1 allowed more people to meet outdoors, more events took place, more retail outlets opened and due to the vaccine rollout a relaxation of the controls on socialising indoors.
- 2.10** The Welsh Government has now, at the time of writing this report, moved to Alert level 0. This now allows any number of people to meet indoors, including in private homes, public places or at events. All businesses and premises can open, with face coverings remaining a legal requirement indoors in commercial premises, with the exception of hospitality premises. Welsh Government continue to advise that people should still work from home wherever possible. Fully vaccinated adults, under 18s and vaccine trial participants will not need to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with coronavirus. The isolation of school bubbles will no longer be required

- 2.11** SRS continues to make a significant contribution to the Test, Trace and Protect scheme (TTP) across the two health boards. SRS officers oversee the tracing of people who have tested positive for coronavirus linking with health professionals to identify trends and incidents and restrict the spread of the disease. The opening up of international travel as indicated above has also become a part of that workload. It is anticipated that the SRS deployment to TTP will reduce through the Summer to allow officers to return to their substantive roles and to also take some well-deserved leave.

#### *Progress against the SRS Business Plan 2021-22*

- 2.12** Elected members have asked for a regular update on progress against the SRS Business Plan in light of the diversion of resources to respond to the Covid outbreak. The 2021/22 plan contains 48 actions designed to underpin the five SRS priorities mentioned in paragraph 1.1 above.
- 2.13** Of the 48 actions identified, 1 has been completed fully, 22 are on target, 16 are in progress a number of which have been completed in the Q2 period, 7 are not yet scheduled to start, 1 is overdue and 1 has been categorised as unable to complete. The overdue action relates to HMO licensing in Cathays and the unable to complete action relates to taxi enforcement and emissions work at Cardiff.

#### *Communicable Disease Plan*

- 2.14** SRS publishes a number of operational plans to advise stakeholders of the work to be carried out in certain environments. The document attached at **Appendix 4** is the Communicable Disease Plan, which sets out how the SRS will fulfil its role of protecting public health through the investigation of cases and outbreaks of communicable disease and the application of control, preventative and enforcement measures.
- 2.15** It is important to note that the SRS commitments to dealing with Covid 19 does not form any significant part of the plan. Traditionally SRS has not had a role in dealing with respiratory illnesses; that has been the province of Public Health Wales. The plan does set out the challenges that SRS has faced through cases of legionella, campylobacter and listeria which occurred during the last 12 months.

#### *Audits and Assessments*

- 2.16** Elected members will recall the recommendations made by the Wales Audit Office (WAO) in their report – Delivering with Less. One of those recommendations was that *the Council(s) should introduce greater challenge of the level and quality of environmental health services provided by third parties, including the SRS under the Joint Working Agreement*. One way that the SRS seeks to demonstrate service improvement and service quality is through audit and assessment. In the last quarter the SRS has received three audit reports.

- 2.17** The first of these reports related to an audit by the Regional Internal Audit Service of SRS Governance and Financial Controls 2021-22. The purpose of the audit was to provide the necessary assurance to the SRS Joint Committee that financial controls and governance are operating effectively and in compliance with the Council's policies and procedures including Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure rules. Audit testing was undertaken in respect of the 2020-21 financial year.
- 2.18** For this audit, the Service was awarded an audit category code of *Reasonable Assurance*, meaning that there is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place in the Service. Supporting this, a number of low priority recommendations were made with respect to reviewing suppliers, reclaiming VAT on all purchases and cross-checking officer authorisation levels for purchasing. In addition, further recommendations were made concerning the work of the Joint Committee, on scrutiny arrangements and also the need for the SRS annual report to be shared with the Cabinets of the three partner authorities. A recommendation was made to ensure that all SRS Management Board meetings are quorate in compliance with the Joint Working Agreement, with minutes being taken and maintained to demonstrate attendance.
- 2.19** The second of the audit reports related to the Wales Illegal Money Lending Grant Verification 2020-21. Again, this was undertaken by the Regional Internal Audit Service, and resulted in an audit category code of *Substantial Assurance*, meaning that a sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied. No key issues were identified during this audit.
- 2.20** The third and final audit report received by the Service followed the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) audit of the *SRS Mass Calibration (Metrology) Laboratory*. The auditors found the management system in place to be well established, maintained to a high level of compliance, and working effectively. The assessment team expressed their confidence in the results being reported by the laboratory and the only area advised upon was in the context of improving cause analysis through the use of corrective actions and any customer complaints as they arise in the future. The result of the UKAS audit was the continuation of UKAS accreditation to the ISO/IEC 17025:2017 standard for the SRS mass calibration laboratory.

## *New legislation*

### **E10 petrol**

- 2.21** The introduction of E10 petrol is occurring this summer. E10 petrol contains up to 10% renewable ethanol, which will help to reduce the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions associated with petrol vehicles and tackle climate change. E10 petrol is already widely used around the world and is the reference fuel against which new cars are tested for emissions and performance. The introduction of E10 petrol at UK forecourts could cut transport CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 750,000 tonnes a year – the equivalent of taking 350,000 cars off the road
- 2.22** Petrol in the UK currently contains up to 5% renewable ethanol (to be known as E5) and E5 fuel remains suitable for all petrol vehicles, while cars manufactured since 2011 should be compatible with E10 petrol. Most cars and motorcycles manufactured since the late 1990s are also approved by manufacturers to use E10.
- 2.23** Using a single tank of E10 petrol in a vehicle that is not compatible should not cause any significant problems unlike putting petrol into a diesel engine. Prolonged use of E10 petrol in a non-compatible vehicle may cause harm and is not recommended. At the petrol station, a circular 'E10' or 'E5' label will be clearly visible on both the petrol dispenser and nozzle to identify the correct petrol to use. The government have a vehicle checker weblink to allow consumers to check whether a vehicle is approved to use E10 petrol. SRS will be taking a pragmatic approach to enforcement.

### **Eco design and energy labelling**

- 2.24** Ecodesign and Energy Labelling policies aim to reduce the energy-use, carbon footprint and wider environmental impacts of energy-related products and to save consumers money on their energy bills. Recent amendments to these Regulations will now require manufacturers to improve the eco-design of these products. The Regulations introduce tighter rules for how much energy white goods, such as washing machines, can use and sets out new 'right to repair' rules.
- 2.25** These changes impose a legal obligation on manufacturers to make available spare parts and repair and maintenance information for particular appliances in order to facilitate repairs. Manufacturers will have to incorporate 'reparability' into their designs and processes to ensure compliance with the new rules. Simple replacement parts such as door hinges and replacement drawers should be made available directly for consumers to purchase but more complex parts should be made available to repair companies. Currently, the rules notably exclude laptops, tablets and smartphones.

**2.26** Energy Labelling regulations ensure clear and consistent information on a products' energy usage is readily available. This helps consumers make informed purchase decisions, encouraging the uptake of the most energy efficient products. Suppliers are obliged to provide accurate energy labels and make them clearly visible to consumers at the point of sale. This year sees a change to the labelling regime with energy labels for certain products being re-scaled to display A – G energy rating classes instead of A+++ – G energy rating classes. The first phase of re-scaling affecting products such as TVs and white goods took effect in March 2021. These changes will extend to lighting products in October 2021.

### **Food allergen labelling**

**2.27** It is estimated that around 2 million people across the UK live with a food allergy or intolerance. The law requires food businesses to indicate the presence of any one of 14 different types of allergens in the food and drink they supply. These are categorised as follows:

- celery
- cereals that contain gluten – including wheat, rye, barley, and oats
- crustaceans – such as prawns, crabs, and lobsters
- eggs
- fish
- lupin
- milk
- molluscs – such as mussels and oysters
- mustard
- tree nuts – including almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, pistachios, and macadamia nuts
- peanuts
- sesame seeds
- soybeans
- sulphur dioxide and sulphites

**2.28** Currently, this information is declared in one of two ways. For food and drink products prepacked in advance before being supplied to outlets, allergens must be declared as part of the product's food labelling (in such a way that it stands out clearly, for example by using bold text). For all other foods (non-prepacked / loose products and those items wrapped on the premises where it is sold), the requirement is for the food businesses to be able to provide customers with information on the presence of allergens, and this should be available in writing or by enquiring with a member of staff on site.

**2.29** Following a number of tragic incidents where customers have died as a result of consuming products that they were unaware contained certain allergens, the law on allergen declaration is changing on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. The amendment to the legislation is commonly known as Natasha's law after Natasha Ednan-Laperouse who suffered a severe allergic reaction in 2016 after purchasing a baguette



unaware that it contained sesame, and died of anaphylaxis at the age of just 15. From October 1<sup>st</sup>, Natasha's law will require *all products pre-packed for direct sale* to have a full list of ingredients showing clearly the presence of any of the 14 specified allergens. Pre-packed for direct sale foods are those that are placed in sealed packaging on the premises where they will be sold, before a customer makes their selection. Examples of foods commonly pre-packed for direct sale include sandwiches, wraps and bakery items, but depending on the circumstances many other foods can fall within this definition.

**2.30** In the run up to the change in the law, SRS has been working with businesses of all shapes and sizes to assist them in complying with the new requirement. In order to support this approach, free online workshops are being provided during September for businesses across Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. The workshops are designed to provide food businesses with an overview of the legal requirements but also provides the opportunity to ask questions about the changes and how they apply to individual businesses.

**2.31** Further raising awareness of the change in the law on allergen labelling, SRS has been working with the team at Bro Radio to produce the first of an ongoing series of podcasts entitled *Ask the Regulator*. The first edition of the podcast focusses on allergens and provides crucial information in a clear, user friendly format for businesses and consumers alike. The podcast can be accessed at <https://www.srs.wales/en/Business-Advice/Podcasts.aspx>

### **Enforcement Activity**

**2.32** Details of recent cases investigated by the SRS that have resulted in prosecution are set out in **Appendix 5** to this report.

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

**3.1** The Well-being 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. Consequently, SRS seeks to work in the following ways:

- Looking to the long term
- Taking an integrated approach;
- Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions affecting them;
- Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions
- Acting to prevent problems from occurring or getting worse.

- 3.2** The fundamental purpose of the SRS (here defined as trading standards, environmental health and licensing) is to protect residents, consumers, businesses and communities. The broad range of responsibilities can make it difficult to demonstrate succinctly their impact and value in terms of the wellbeing; the SRS Business Plans provide members with greater detail and articulate how those statutory responsibilities, and subsequent activities, contribute toward wellbeing across the region. This update report reflects some of the activities undertaken in recent months to promote the sustainable development principle.

## **4. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 4.1** The Participants' contribution towards the Shared Regulatory Service is recharged on a quarterly basis, based upon the approved budgets for 2021/22. Accounting for the full year is reported to the Committee at the Annual General Meeting.

### **Employment**

- 4.2** There are no immediate employment implications associated with this report.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 4.3** There are no immediate legal implications associated with this report.

## **5. Background Papers**

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Quarter 1 Financial report
- Appendix 2 Quarter 1 Performance data
- Appendix 3 Quarter 1 infographic on COVID related work
- Appendix 4 Communicable disease Plan 2021/22
- Appendix 5 Details of SRS prosecutions.

Meeting of:	<b>Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Tuesday, 28 September 2021</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Revenue Monitoring for the Period 1st April to 30th June 2021
Purpose of Report:	To provide the Partner Authorities with details of the financial performance of the Shared Regulatory Service
Report Owner:	Section 151 Officer
Responsible Officer:	Miles Punter Director of Environment and Housing Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Head of Service for Shared Regulatory Service
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for the Shared Regulatory Committee
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The £8.331m 2021/22 gross revenue budget was agreed by the Joint Committee on the 8th December 2020 and includes an assumed 2.75% pay increase which was partially offset by a 1.9% reduction in the employer's superannuation contribution rate. No further savings were incorporated in the 2021/22 budget.</li> <li>• As a result of the Covid pandemic, the 2021/22 revenue position will be challenging with sustained pressure on the service both operationally and financially. Additional funding is being provided by Welsh Government to address some of these issues.</li> <li>• As at 30th June 2021, Shared Regulatory Service is forecasting an outturn position of a £143k overspend against the 2021/22 gross revenue budget. This position is due to horse accommodation costs in Q1.</li> <li>• The horse seizure court case was found in favour of the SRS in April 2021. Ownership of the horses was transferred to the SRS with a significant number moved to suitable homes during Q1.</li> <li>• To date, £131k has been claimed from Welsh Government in respect of claims made against the Covid-19 Hardship Grant which funded the additional activities undertaken in the Covid Compliance and three Enforcement teams that cover the SRS region.</li> <li>• The service continues to provide support to the two Health Boards that cover the SRS region in the provision of the Track, Trace and Protect service, with 100% of the resulting £153k expenditure recouped from Cardiff and Bridgend Councils in the period.</li> </ul>	

## Recommendation

1. That the position with regard to the 2021/22 forecast outturn position is noted.

## Reason for Recommendation

1. That the members are aware of the position with regard to the 2021/22 forecast outturn position pertinent to the Board and relevant Scrutiny Committee.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 On the 8th December 2020, the Shared Regulatory Service (SRS) Committee approved the SRS Gross Revenue Budget for 2021/22.
- 1.2 The Covid-19 lockdown measures introduced in March 2020 as a result of the pandemic, continue to impact considerably on the work undertaken within the SRS, together with the ability of the service to undertake inspections and visits. This has required the Service to continually modify the way in which it works which will undoubtedly continue to have an impact on service delivery throughout 2021/22. In light of these significant changes, it has been necessary to constantly review service delivery throughout the lockdown period and determine long-term measures that can be implemented to include the accessibility of services, risk assessments for officers and the collaborative working arrangements with other organisations.
- 1.3 Environmental Health Officers from across the Service continue to be seconded to support the regional Trace, Track and Protect teams of the two Health Boards that cover the SRS region. A reduced provision has been consumed in Q1, however with the easing of Covid restrictions this position is likely to change.
- 1.4 There are six members of staff on secondments out of the Service. The cost of these secondments are being recovered from Cardiff Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Welsh Local Government Association and Welsh Government. This has provided opportunities for staff to act up into more senior roles.
- 1.5 There continues to be uncertainty on how many businesses will cease trading as a result of Covid-19, and the very likely economic downturn directly associated with the pandemic. Each business that ceases trading and remains vacant will result in a loss of income for the Councils.
- 1.6 The impact of the pandemic has also had a visible bearing on income generated by the Service. Grant funding can be accessed from Welsh Government to support the loss of income to help mitigate any shortfall. As at the date of this report it has not been necessary to access this funding, however, should the position not improve claims will be submitted in future periods.

## 2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 The Gross Revenue Budget and forecast outturn position for 2021/22 are shown in the tables below, with the position in respect of each of the partners detailed to include both the Core and Authority Specific expenditure positions. As at Q1, The service is forecasting a £143k overspend against a gross revenue budget of £8.331m, as illustrated in the following table:

	<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>Outturn Variance</b>
<b>Authority</b>	<b>£'000's</b>	<b>£'000's</b>	<b>£'000's</b>
Bridgend	1,777	1,754	23
Cardiff	4,812	4,954	(142)
Vale	1,742	1,766	(24)
<b>Total Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>8,331</b>	<b>8,474</b>	<b>(143)</b>

- 2.2 Multiple recruitment drives have been undertaken, however, the Service continues to experience significant issues in attracting appropriate candidates to particular disciplines within the service, which may in part be due to a national scarcity of resource being available. This issue may also be compounded by restrictions in movement relating to national Covid restrictions surrounding travel and infection control being put in place.
- 2.3 The Service has continued to work with local universities in the practical support of students who are enrolled on degree courses relevant to the areas within the SRS where there are vacancies. A sizeable number of newly qualified Environmental Health Officers have been employed to assist with Covid Enforcement issues throughout the region, with this initiative being funded by the Welsh Government Covid Enforcement Grant.
- 2.4 Where possible, staff have worked from home since the outbreak of Covid-19, with only skeleton staffing levels at the hubs, therefore achieving compliance with the social distancing guidance.
- 2.5 Due to qualifications and specific skills held by SRS employees a specialist team has been created to support the Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) teams across the SRS area. This has placed additional pressure on residual staffing levels and workflows.
- 2.6 A full breakdown of the forecast outturn position is shown in **Appendix A**.

## Core Services

- 2.7 The approved gross Core Services Budget for 2021/22 is £5.941m which is forecasting an overspend of £121k. The Core service's budget is allocated in line with the population split across the participating authorities, as illustrated in the following table:

		<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>Outturn Variance</b>
<b>Authority</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>£'000's</b>	<b>£'000's</b>	<b>£'000's</b>
Bridgend	22.67%	1,347	1,372	(25)
Cardiff	56.56%	3,360	3,432	(72)
Vale	20.77%	1,234	1,258	(24)
<b>Total Core</b>		<b>5,941</b>	<b>6,062</b>	<b>(121)</b>

- 2.8 The forecast £224k overspend within Animal Services is the consequence of the horse accommodation costs incurred in Q1. Ownership of the horses has been transferred to the SRS, with suitable homes located for the majority of the horses, with only a very small number still seeking new homes.
- 2.9 The recent increase in dog ownership has given rise to a significant increase in the number of complaints of sick puppies and unsuitable breeding practices which has put increased pressure on the team. One of the officers from this team is on a partial secondment to a Wales wide team to address these issues.
- 2.10 Environmental Services are forecasting a £33k underspend, which is predominantly the result of an air quality officer seconded to Cardiff to assist in the City's Air Quality Initiative, with the post left unfilled, although it is likely that this position will be filled in a future period.
- 2.11 Food Services are forecasting a £32k underspend, which is a consequence of staff resources continuing to be diverted to support TTP activities. More staff resources are being absorbed at Ports where there are enhanced controls to minimise the risk of new variants and ensuring adequate infection prevention control measures are implemented in the various settings to minimise the risk of the onward transmission of infection. The remaining resources are being directed to address the requirements of the Food Standards Agency Wales Recovery Plan which requires the prioritisation of inspections of new businesses based on risk up until the 30th September 2021. It is estimated that the SRS has 33% of the total new businesses across Wales that require an inspection.
- 2.12 Housing Services is currently forecasting an overspend of £23k. Officer visits to private properties have now commenced where there is an identified need. Additionally, there has been an increase to the number and complexity of complaints received where residential properties are falling into disrepair through lack of routine repair and maintenance being undertaken. There have also been a higher than expected number of properties where the Service has had to intervene to negate these issues, through the use of legal powers held.
- 2.13 Health & Safety and Communicable Disease (HSCD) Service is forecasting an overspend of £5k, which may be negated in future periods based on the level of support provided to the regional TTP teams for both the Cardiff & Vale plus Cwm Taf Health Boards. Two students who were initially employed by the Covid Enforcement team are now supporting the work of the HSCD team. TTP staffing predominantly came from this specialism, with additional support provided from other SRS teams where expertise and capacity permits.
- 2.14 Pollution Services are forecasting a £25k underspend. The partial lifting of Covid restrictions on hospitality, together with the arrival of warm weather has resulted in a notable increase to the level of noise pollution complaints received, predominantly where hospitality venues are re-opening and holding events. The teams are working with the relevant licensing sections where it has been established that these events are unlicensed.
- 2.15 Trading Standards are reporting a forecast underspend of £41k, which is the result of the shortage of suitable candidates to fill vacant posts plus a secondment to Welsh Government. During Q1, Illicit tobacco products with a street value of £92k have been seized as part of an operation targeting illegal tobacco. Twelve commercial businesses were found to have inaccurate weighing equipment with notices issued to address this issue. Inspections to retail premises holding alcohol licenses found 8 premises that were

not compliant with the minimum unit pricing of alcohol who subsequently received written warnings, and will be subject to further inspections to ensure future compliance.

- 2.16 The Service continues to support Primary Authority companies, issuing Covid advice and support to companies such as major supermarkets and hospitality businesses where the economy is re-opening. It is noticeable that general consensus is that things have returned to normal - which is not the case. An emerging trend is that business compliance has slipped particularly around hygiene matters where less inspections had been undertaken.
- 2.17 The 2021/22 Welsh Government Rentsmart Grants of £66k are built into the SRS budget. The grant forms an element of the Housing Support Grant received directly by the partner Authorities, therefore, as with previous years, the SRS costs will be recouped directly from the partners at year end.

## Authority Specific Services

- 2.18 The approved gross budget of £2.390m in respect of Authority Specific (AS) Services has a forecast overspend of £22k, as detailed in the following table:

	<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>Outturn Variance</b>
<b>Authority</b>	<b>£'000's</b>	<b>£'000's</b>	<b>£'000's</b>
Bridgend	430	382	48
Cardiff	1,452	1,522	(70)
Vale	508	508	0
<b>Total AS Services</b>	<b>2,390</b>	<b>2,412</b>	<b>( 22)</b>

- 2.19 The £48k underspend at Bridgend, relates directly to underspends within the Kennelling & Vets plus Licensing Services.
- 2.20 Kennelling and Vets has a forecast underspend of £29k with activity continuing to perform below target, this is very much consistent with activity levels realised in previous periods. Despite the notable uptake in dog ownership during the Covid restriction period, the number of dogs being presented as homeless has continued to decline.
- 2.21 The £19k underspend within the Bridgend Licensing section is the result of carrying a temporary vacancy.
- 2.22 Bridgend Empty Homes has a forecast balanced position.
- 2.23 The £70k overspend at Cardiff predominantly relates to a forecast £80k overspend within the Taxi Licensing Section, where there continues to be expenditure in excess of budget within both the Employee and Supplies and Services elements of the budget, which is consistent with previous years.
- 2.24 The Licensing service both administers and enforces the licensing functions including taxi, private hire vehicles, pubs clubs, street trading consent fees and other aspects of the hospitality sector/night-time economy. These are arguably the sectors that have

been most impacted by Covid restrictions and, as a result a number of licence holders have surrendered their license or chosen not to renew it in Q1.

- 2.25 HMO Cathays and HMO Plasnewydd have a combined £7k underspend.
- 2.26 The Student Liaison Officer is forecasting a £3k underspend. The officer has worked together with the Universities, Public Health Wales, Welsh Government and the Police to develop and disseminate guidance for students in respect of Covid restrictions.
- 2.27 Commercial and licensed premises in Cardiff have had restricted trading during the period. However, as restrictions are lifted it is anticipated that the demand of the Night Time Noise team will increase with an overall balanced position anticipated by year end.
- 2.28 A balanced position is anticipated within Cardiff Port Health Authority.
- 2.29 Overall, the Vale is forecasting a balanced position for Authority Specific Services, with the overspend in Burials directly offset by the underspend within the Kennelling & Vets Service.
- 2.30 The Licensing Service is forecasting a balanced position. Covid continues to have a significant impact on all sectors of the hospitality trade, community outdoor events and the taxi trade.
- 2.31 The forecast £14k overspend within the Burial section reflects the anticipated uptake of public health funerals in the year, and is consistent with 2020/21 pressures. As at Q1, there are no known Covid related funerals.
- 2.32 The Pest Control Service is forecasting an overall balanced position.
- 2.33 The Kennelling and Vets Service continues to emulate the reduction in pressures experienced at Bridgend, and as a result has a forecast £14k underspend.

## Net Position

In accordance with the Joint Working Agreement (JWA), income budgets remain the responsibility of each Partner Authority and are shown in this report for completeness. The following table illustrates the forecast overspend of £396k, against a net budget of £6.205m.

	<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>Outturn Variance</b>
<b>Authority</b>	<b>£'000's</b>	<b>£'000's</b>	<b>£'000's</b>
Bridgend	1,310	1,540	(230)
Cardiff	3,494	3,636	(142)
Vale	1,401	1,425	(24)
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>6,205</b>	<b>6,601</b>	<b>(396)</b>

- 2.34 A full breakdown of the forecast outturn position is illustrated in **Appendix B**.
- 2.35 The forecast net position for Bridgend is an overspend of £230k against a net budget of £1.310m, which is the result the £23k gross expenditure underspend being offset by a £253k shortfall in forecast income receipts.
- 2.36 Core income is forecast to under achieve the budget by £2k.



- 2.37 Licensing income is forecast to under achieve the budget by £251k. Bridgend have confirmed that they intend to submit claims to WG in respect of the Covid income loss grant.
- 2.38 The forecast net position for Cardiff mirrors the gross expenditure position of a £142k overspend. No guidance has been received on the income forecasts, therefore this report assumes that income receipts will meet target.
- 2.39 The net forecast for the Vale of Glamorgan reflects the gross expenditure forecast of a £24k overspend, against a net budget of £1.401m. Income is forecast to achieve the budget.

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

Validation of the manner in which the SRS contributes to the Well-Being Objectives will be provided for within the Overview and Update Report submitted to the Committee by the Service.

### **4. Resources and Legal Considerations**

#### **Financial**

As detailed in the body of this report.

#### **Employment**

- 4.1 There are no employment implications.

#### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 4.2 There are no legal implications.

### **5. Background Papers**

None.

	Bridgend 2021/22			Cardiff 2021/22			Vale 2021/22			Total Gross Expenditure 2021/22		
	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
<b><u>Authority Specific</u></b>												
Bridgend Licensing	345	326	19							345	326	19
Bridgend Empty Homes	38	38	0							38	38	0
Kennelling & Vets Fees (Bridgend)	47	18	29							47	18	29
Cardiff Licencing				702	782	(80)				702	782	(80)
HMO Cathays				203	196	7				203	196	7
HMO Plasnewydd				275	275	0				275	275	0
Student Liaison				65	62	3				65	62	3
Night Time Noise				62	62	0				62	62	0
Cardiff Port Health				145	145	0				145	145	0
Vale Licensing							382	382	0	382	382	0
Burials (Vale)							1	15	(14)	1	15	(14)
Pest Control Service (Vale)							105	105	0	105	105	0
Vets & Kennelling Fees (Vale)							20	6	14	20	6	14
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>1,452</b>	<b>1,522</b>	<b>(70)</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,390</b>	<b>2,412</b>	<b>(22)</b>
<b><u>Core Services</u></b>												
Animal Services	88	139	(51)	221	347	(126)	81	128	(47)	390	614	(224)
Environmental	50	43	7	125	106	19	46	39	7	221	188	33
Food Services	338	330	8	842	824	18	309	303	6	1,489	1,457	32
Housing Services	147	150	(3)	366	383	(17)	134	137	(3)	647	670	(23)
Health & Safety & Communicable Disease	143	144	(1)	356	359	(3)	131	132	(1)	630	635	(5)
Pollution Services	200	194	6	498	484	14	183	178	5	881	856	25
Trading Standards	381	372	9	952	929	23	350	341	9	1,683	1,642	41
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>1,347</b>	<b>1,372</b>	<b>(25)</b>	<b>3,360</b>	<b>3,432</b>	<b>(72)</b>	<b>1,234</b>	<b>1,258</b>	<b>(24)</b>	<b>5,941</b>	<b>6,062</b>	<b>(121)</b>
<b>Gross Expenditure Budget</b>	<b>1,777</b>	<b>1,754</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4,812</b>	<b>4,954</b>	<b>(142)</b>	<b>1,742</b>	<b>1,766</b>	<b>(24)</b>	<b>8,331</b>	<b>8,474</b>	<b>(143)</b>

	2021/22 Expenditure Budget £000's	2021/22 Income Budget £000's	2021/22 Net Budget £000's	Jun-21 Profiled Net Budget £000's	Jun-21 Actual Expenditure £000's	Jun-21 Actual Income £000's	Jun-21 Net Position £000's	Net Variance To Date £000's	Projected £000's	Year End Variance Favour/(Adverse) £000's
	A	B	C = A - B	D	E	F	G = E - F	H = D - G	I	J = C - I
<b><u>Bridgend</u></b>										
<b>Core</b>	1,347	(60)	1,287	322	332	(7)	325	(3)	1,314	(27)
<b>Authority Specific</b>										
Licensing	345	(407)	(62)	(16)	76	(36)	40	(56)	170	(232)
Empty Homes	38	0	38	10	10	0	10	0	38	0
Kenneling & Vets	47	0	47	12	2	0	2	10	18	29
	<b>1,777</b>	<b>(467)</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>(43)</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>(49)</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>(230)</b>
<b><u>Cardiff</u></b>										
<b>Core</b>	3,360	(183)	3,177	794	836	(48)	788	6	3,249	(72)
<b>Authority Specific</b>										
Cardiff Licencing	702	(850)	(148)	(37)	197	(158)	39	(76)	(68)	(80)
HMO Cathays	203	(55)	148	37	35	(35)	0	37	141	7
HMO Plasnewydd	275	(87)	188	47	68	(84)	(16)	63	188	0
Student Liaison	65	(17)	48	12	7	0	7	5	45	3
Night Time Noise	62	0	62	16	8	0	8	8	62	0
Cardiff Port Health	145	(126)	19	5	28	(28)	0	5	19	0
	<b>4,812</b>	<b>(1,318)</b>	<b>3,494</b>	<b>874</b>	<b>1,179</b>	<b>(353)</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>3,636</b>	<b>(142)</b>
<b><u>Vale of Glamorgan</u></b>										
<b>Core</b>	1,234	(11)	1,223	306	304	(4)	300	6	1,247	(24)
<b>Authority Specific</b>										
Vale Licensing	382	(290)	92	23	92	(50)	42	(19)	92	0
Burials (Vale)	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	(1)	15	(14)
Pest Control Service (Vale)	105	(40)	65	16	22	(22)	0	16	65	0
Vets & Kennelling Fees (Vale)	20	0	20	5	(1)		(1)	6	6	14
	<b>1,742</b>	<b>(341)</b>	<b>1,401</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>(76)</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1,425</b>	<b>(24)</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8,331</b>	<b>(2,126)</b>	<b>6,205</b>	<b>1,552</b>	<b>2,017</b>	<b>(472)</b>	<b>1,545</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6,601</b>	<b>(396)</b>

# Shared Regulatory Services

## Quarterly Performance Report 2021-22

### Quarter 1



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# High Risk Food Hygiene Inspections

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2021-22	Food Combined	Bridgend	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	5	52	9.62%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect Service which has impacted on the capacity of the Food Teams to undertake programmed inspections. Notwithstanding this, the service has prioritised Category A businesses and the one inspection due in Qtr 1 was completed. This is in line with the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework introduced at the end of Qtr 1 which has been implemented within SRS to deal with the backlog of programmed inspections as a result of the pandemic. This will see the prioritisation of Category A inspections and new businesses during 2021-22.	100%
2021-22	Food Combined	Cardiff	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	5	168	2.98%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect service which has impacted on the capacity of the Food teams to undertake programmed inspections. Notwithstanding this, the service has prioritised Category A businesses, 2 of which were completed during Qtr 1. This is in line with the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework introduced at the end of Qtr 1 which has been implemented within SRS to deal with the backlog of programmed inspections as a result of the pandemic. This will see the prioritisation of Category A inspections and new businesses during 2021-22.	100%
2021-22	Food Combined	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	6	59	10.17%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect Service which has impacted on the capacity of the Food Teams to undertake programmed inspections. Notwithstanding this, the service has prioritised Category A businesses and the one inspection due in Qtr 1 was completed. This is in line with the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework introduced at the end of Qtr 1 which has been implemented within SRS to deal with the backlog of programmed inspections as a result of the pandemic. This will see the prioritisation of Category A inspections and new businesses during 2021-22.	100%
2021-22	Food Combined	SRS	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	16	279	5.73%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect Service which has impacted on the capacity of the Food teams to undertake programmed inspections. Notwithstanding this, the service has prioritised Category A businesses, 4 of which were completed in Qtr 1. This is in line with the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework introduced at the end of Qtr 1 which has been implemented within SRS to deal with the backlog of programmed inspections as a result of the pandemic. This will see the prioritisation of Category A inspections and new businesses during 2021-22.	100%

# High Risk Food Hygiene Inspections

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2021-22	Food Combined	Bridgend	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	42	499	8.42%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect Service which has impacted on the capacity of the Food Teams to undertake Category C inspections. Furthermore, the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework, introduced at the end of Qtr 1 to deal with the backlog of programmed inspections, requires the service to prioritise Category A and new business inspections during 2021/22. This has inevitably further impacted on the completion of Category C inspections due.	90%
2021-22	Food Combined	Cardiff	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	50	1172	4.27%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect Service which has impacted on the capacity of the Food Teams to undertake Category C inspections. Furthermore, the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework, introduced at the end of Qtr 1 to deal with the backlog of programmed inspections, requires the service to prioritise Category A and new business inspections during 2021/22. This has inevitably further impacted on the completion of Category C inspections due.	90%
2021-22	Food Combined	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	19	485	3.92%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect Service which has impacted on the capacity of the Food Teams to undertake Category C inspections. Furthermore, the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework, introduced at the end of Qtr 1 to deal with the backlog of programmed inspections, requires the service to prioritise Category A and new business inspections during 2021/22. This has inevitably further impacted on the completion of Category C inspections due.	90%
2021-22	Food Combined	SRS	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	111	2156	5.15%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect Service which has impacted on the capacity of the Food Teams to undertake Category C inspections. Furthermore, the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework, introduced at the end of Qtr 1 to deal with the backlog of programmed inspections, requires the service to prioritise Category A and new business inspections during 2021/22. This has inevitably further impacted on the completion of Category C inspections due.	90%

# New Businesses—Food Hygiene

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2021-22	Food Combined	Bridgend	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 1	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	55	277	19.86%	Red	The suspension of inspections and closure of businesses during the last year has resulted in a significant backlog of new business inspections. This, coupled with staff resources being diverted to Test, Trace, Protect has impacted on the number of inspections undertaken. This is being addressed via the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework which was introduced at the end of Qtr 1. This will see the service prioritising new business inspections during the year with the aim of clearing the backlog by March 22.	90%
2021-22	Food Combined	Cardiff	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 1	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	137	814	16.83%	Red	The suspension of inspections and closure of businesses during the last year has resulted in a significant backlog of new business inspections. This, coupled with staff resources being diverted to Test, Trace, Protect has impacted on the number of inspections undertaken. This is being addressed via the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework which was introduced at the end of Qtr 1. This will see the service prioritising new business inspections during the year with the aim of clearing the backlog by March 22.	90%
2021-22	Food Combined	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 1	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	55	267	20.60%	Red	The suspension of inspections and closure of businesses during the last year has resulted in a significant backlog of new business inspections. This, coupled with staff resources being diverted to Test, Trace, Protect has impacted on the number of inspections undertaken. This is being addressed via the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework which was introduced at the end of Qtr 1. This will see the service prioritising new business inspections during the year with the aim of clearing the backlog by March 22.	90%
2021-22	Food Combined	SRS	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 1	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	247	1358	18.19%	Red	The suspension of inspections and closure of businesses during the last year has resulted in a significant backlog of new business inspections. This, coupled with staff resources being diverted to Test, Trace, Protect has impacted on the number of inspections undertaken. This is being addressed via the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework which was introduced at the end of Qtr 1. This will see the service prioritising new business inspections during the year with the aim of clearing the backlog by March 22.	90%

# Broadly Compliant Food Premises

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2021-22	Food	Bridgend	PAM/23	Qtr 1	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	1241	1279	97.03%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%
2021-22	Food	Cardiff	PAM/23	Qtr 1	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	2965	3116	95.15%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%
2021-22	Food	Vale of Glam	PAM/23	Qtr 1	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	1206	1242	97.10%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%
2021-22	Food	SRS	PAM/23	Qtr 1	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	5412	5637	96.01%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%



# High Risk Trading Standards Inspections

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2021-22	TS combined	Bridgend	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	0	8	0.00%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect service and Joint Enforcement Teams which has impacted on the capacity of the service to undertake programmed inspections. The Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework introduced at the end of Qtr 1 which has been implemented within SRS to deal with the backlog of programmed food standards inspections will ensure the prioritisation of Category A Food standards inspections until June 22.	100%
2021-22	TS Combined	Cardiff	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	2	26	7.69%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect service and Joint Enforcement Teams which has impacted on the capacity of the service to undertake programmed inspections. The Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework introduced at the end of Qtr 1 which has been implemented within SRS to deal with the backlog of programmed food standards inspections will ensure the prioritisation of Category A Food standards inspections until June 22.	100%
2021-22	TS Combined	Vale of Glam	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	0	2	0.00%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect service and Joint Enforcement Teams which has impacted on the capacity of the service to undertake programmed inspections. The Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework introduced at the end of Qtr 1 which has been implemented within SRS to deal with the backlog of programmed food standards inspections will ensure the prioritisation of Category A Food standards inspections until June 22.	100%
2021-22	TS Combined	SRS	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 1	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	2	36	5.56%	Red	The continuing presence of cases of Covid-19 has required resources to be redirected to the Test, Trace, Protect service and Joint Enforcement Teams which has impacted on the capacity of the service to undertake programmed inspections. The Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework introduced at the end of Qtr 1 which has been implemented within SRS to deal with the backlog of programmed food standards inspections will ensure the prioritisation of Category A Food standards inspections until June 22.	100%

# New business—Trading Standards

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2021-22	TS combined	Bridgend	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 1	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit or returned a self-assessment questionnaire during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	38	314	12.10%	Red	The suspension of inspections and closure of businesses during the last year has resulted in a significant backlog of new business inspections. This, coupled with staff resources being diverted to Test, Trace, Protect and Joint Enforcement Teams has impacted on the number of inspections undertaken. This is being addressed in part via the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework which was introduced at the end of Qtr 1. This will see the service prioritising FS new business inspections during the year with the aim of clearing the backlog by June 22.	80%
2021-22	TS Combined	Cardiff	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 1	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit or returned a self-assessment questionnaire during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	61	783	7.79%	Red	The suspension of inspections and closure of businesses during the last year has resulted in a significant backlog of new business inspections. This, coupled with staff resources being diverted to Test, Trace, Protect and Joint Enforcement Teams has impacted on the number of inspections undertaken. This is being addressed in part via the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework which was introduced at the end of Qtr 1. This will see the service prioritising FS new business inspections during the year with the aim of clearing the backlog by June 22.	80%
2021-22	TS Combined	Vale of Glam	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 1	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit or returned a self-assessment questionnaire during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	30	352	8.52%	Red	The suspension of inspections and closure of businesses during the last year has resulted in a significant backlog of new business inspections. This, coupled with staff resources being diverted to Test, Trace, Protect and Joint Enforcement Teams has impacted on the number of inspections undertaken. This is being addressed in part via the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework which was introduced at the end of Qtr 1. This will see the service prioritising FS new business inspections during the year with the aim of clearing the backlog by June 22.	80%
2021-22	TS Combined	SRS	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 1	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit or returned a self-assessment questionnaire during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	129	1449	8.90%	Red	The suspension of inspections and closure of businesses during the last year has resulted in a significant backlog of new business inspections. This, coupled with staff resources being diverted to Test, Trace, Protect and Joint Enforcement Teams has impacted on the number of inspections undertaken. This is being addressed in part via the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan framework which was introduced at the end of Qtr 1. This will see the service prioritising FS new business inspections during the year with the aim of clearing the backlog by June 22.	80%

# Noise and Air Pollution

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. re- sponded to	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2020-21	Pollution	Bridgend	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 1	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	220	255	86.27%	Amber	The services' commitment to Test, Trace and Protect and the Joint Enforcement Team has resulted in the redeployment of one officer to the Joint Enforcemnt Team. This, coupled with the increase in complaints received as restrictions were lifted, has impacted on the capacity of the team to meet the required targets.	90%
2020-21	Pollution	Cardiff	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 1	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	653	699	93.42%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2020-21	Pollution	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 1	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	130	140	92.86%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2020-21	Pollution	SRS	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 1	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	1003	1094	91.68%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%

# Noise and Air Pollution

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. re- sponded to	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2020-21	Pollution	Bridgend	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 1	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	59	88	<b>67.05%</b>	Amber	The services' commitment to Test, Trace and Protect and the Joint Enforcement Team has resulted in the redeployment of one officer to the Joint Enforcemnt Team. This, coupled with the increase in complaints received as restrictions were lifted, has impacted on the capacity of the team to meet the required targets.	75%
2020-21	Pollution	Cardiff	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 1	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	150	204	<b>73.53%</b>	Amber	Significant demands were placed on the team due to several vacant posts during Qtr 1 which impacted on these results. Additional resources have now been secured, however one post remains vacant due to a secondment to support other areas of SRS.	75%
2020-21	Pollution	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 1	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	66	90	<b>73.33%</b>	Amber	Significant demands were placed on the team due to several vacant posts during Qtr 1 which impacted on these results. Additional resources have now been secured, however one post remains vacant due to a secondment to support other areas of SRS.	75%
2020-21	Pollution	SRS	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 1	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	275	382	<b>71.99%</b>	Amber	Significant demands were placed on the teams due to several vacant posts and officers being seconded to support other areas of SRS such as the Joint Enforcement Teams which has impacted on these results.	75%

# Noise and Air Pollution

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. re- sponded to	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2020-21	Pollution	Bridgend	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 1	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	4	5	80.00%	Amber	The services' commitment to Test, Trace and Protect and the Joint Enforcement Team has resulted in the redeployment of one officer to the Joint Enforcemnt Team. This, coupled with the increase in complaints received as restrictions were lifted, has impacted on the capacity of the team to meet the required targets.	90%
2020-21	Pollution	Cardiff	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 1	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	18	20	90.00%	Green	Target achieved.	90%
2020-21	Pollution	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 1	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	1	2	50.00%	Red	Whilst this measure indicates a failure to reach target, this equates to one case that related to an intermittent sounding alarm.	90%
2020-21	Pollution	SRS	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 1	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	23	27	85.19%	Amber	The services' commitment to Test, Trace and Protect and the Joint Enforcement Team has resulted in the redeployment of one officer to the Joint Enforcemnt Team. This, coupled with the increase in complaints received as restrictions were lifted, has impacted on the capacity of the teams to meet the required targets.	90%

# Licensing

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. received	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2020-21	Licensing	Bridgend	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 1	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	19	19	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2020-21	Licensing	Cardiff	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 1	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	142	142	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2020-21	Licensing	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 1	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	35	35	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2020-21	Licensing	SRS	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 1	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	196	196	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%

# Licensing

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. received	Percentage achieved	RAG Sta- tus	Comment	Target
2020-21	Licensing	Bridgend	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 1	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	14	14	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2020-21	Licensing	Cardiff	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 1	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	14	14	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2020-21	Licensing	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 1	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	17	17	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2020-21	Licensing	SRS	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 1	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	45	45	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%

# Licensing

Year	Team	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No determined	No. received	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2020-21	Licensing	Bridgend	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 1	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2020-21	Licensing	Cardiff	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 1	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2020-21	Licensing	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 1	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2020-21	Licensing	SRS	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 1	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%





Shared  
**Regulatory**  
Services

Gwasanaethau  
**Rheoliadol**  
a Rennir

# Covid-19 Response

Qtr 1—April 21 to June 21

**715**

Service requests received making complaint, referrals or seeking advice on Covid-19 related matters



**2684**



Visits made to businesses to check compliance with regulations in respect of social distancing and business closures

**1900**

Confirmed and suspected cases of Covid 19 reported to SRS



**2**

Care settings that received Infection Prevention and Control Assessments

**114**

Statutory Notices issued for non-compliance incl. 99 Improvement, 6 Closure & 9 Compliance Notices



**33**

Outbreaks of new cases in care homes, schools, and nurseries managed

**3**

JET (Joint Enforcement Teams) working in each area

**1**

Warning letter issued and 1 prosecution initiated

**1503**

Noise and Air complaints received.

**20**

Officers seconded to Test, Trace and Protect

**274**

Confirmed cases of Covid-19 relating to care home staff/residents, schools, early years settings and the domiciliary care sector escalated to the regional team

**190**

Enhanced surveillance checks carried out at Cardiff and Barry Seaports and Cardiff Airport



**1**

Profiteering incidents or Covid-19 related scams reported

**Test · Trace · Protect**

# Shared Regulatory Services

## Communicable Disease and Health Service Plan

2021/22



Communicable  
Disease



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# Introduction

Local Authorities have a responsibility to provide comprehensive health protection service to businesses, residents and visitors of Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. This is largely achieved through the investigation of cases and outbreaks of communicable disease and the application of control, preventative and enforcement measures together with a number of other proactive activities. This Service Plan is produced to inform the business community and wider audience of the arrangements Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan has in place to discharge this duty.

The last 12 months has presented an unprecedented challenge to staff across Shared Regulatory Services, with officers having to rapidly and dynamically respond to the global COVID-19 pandemic. This period has seen officers being re-deployed into new roles to actively support the Test, Trace and Protect service; required staff to flexibly adapt their working hours throughout the week and across weekends in response to service demands; and engage with external stakeholders such as Public Health Wales; Local Health Boards and neighbouring Local Authorities in new ways of collaborative working. This has been particularly challenging for Shared Regulatory Services since the region spans 2 Local Health Board areas; each with slightly divergent operational protocols.

As we enter the new financial year, the likely long-term trajectory of the COVID-19 virus remains uncertain. Whilst many officers are slowly returning to their substantive roles, the recovery plan is having to prepare for a rapid realignment of resource should the number of Variants of Concern cases become more prevalent across the region. We recognise the need for rapid adaptation as the pandemic evolves and are realistic in acknowledging that our priorities and plans may change as the year progresses.

This service plan therefore outlines our current arrangements and proposed interventions and actions to be delivered during the year. Whilst these may be subject to change, we remain committed to protecting and improving the health of people across the region.

**Christina Hill**  
**Operational Manager Commercial Services**

# 1. Service Aims and Objectives

## 1.1 Primary aims

The Communicable Disease Service is committed to protecting individuals from harm, preventing communicable disease and promoting health improvement and to demonstrate this; the service has adopted the following aims and objectives.

The overall aim of the service is:-

*The protection and improvement of the health of the people of Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan*

To achieve this, the service has adopted the following key delivery priorities:-

- The timely investigation, surveillance, control, and prevention of sporadic and outbreak cases of communicable disease, including the development and implementation of related public health intervention strategies.
- The enforcement of Health Protection legislation to minimise the spread of communicable disease and contamination from radiation and chemicals that threaten health.
- The provision of infection control and nutritional training.
- Leading and supporting the work of council services and external organisations including local communities and industry to protect and minimise the impact of public health risks to the population of Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.
- In line with Cardiff's Healthy City status undertake targeted health promotion and intervention activities by acting upon the social, economic, environmental and biological determinants of health and wellbeing.

## 1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and local plans

As a regional organisation providing regulatory services across three local authority areas, we place the **corporate priorities** and outcomes of the three councils at the heart of all that we do (Appendix A). In developing our own strategic priorities and outcomes for Shared Regulatory Services, we have considered the priorities of all the three authorities, together with the needs and aspirations of our partners and customers so they translate into priorities that meet local needs.



SRS priorities particularly relevant to the delivery of the communicable disease service are :-

**Improving health and wellbeing** Amongst other factors impacting health, the service works with others to protect public health by controlling and preventing sporadic cases and outbreaks of communicable disease contributing to the reduction in ill health in people.

**Supporting the local economy** The provision of timely advice and engagement on health and infection control issues to businesses, stakeholders, and other local authorities and bodies can benefit the economic viability of businesses. The equitable enforcement of regulations helps to maintain a level playing field, allowing businesses to compete on equal terms.

**Safeguarding the vulnerable** Much of the reactive surveillance work forms the foundation for proactive evidence based interventions focused on vulnerable and 'at risk' sectors of our community. This work routinely involves working in partnership with the business community, Public Health Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales, Local Health Board, voluntary organisations and supporting other Council services such as schools and care sector commissioning teams.

Nationally the service also contributes to the **National Enforcement Priorities for Wales** for local regulatory delivery which highlight the positive contribution that regulatory services, together with local and national partners, can make in delivering better outcomes:-

- Protecting individuals from harm and promoting health improvement
- Ensuring the safety and quality of the food chain to minimise risk to human and animal health
- Promoting a fair and just environment for citizens and business
- Improving the local environment to positively influence quality of life and promote sustainability.

**The Local Public Health (medium term) Plan 2020-2023**, published as part of the Local Public Health Strategic Framework, provides details of how local Public Health teams work in partnership to improve and protect the health and well-being of the local population. The Plan sets out several priority work areas and actions necessary to achieve improvement. A number of themes detailed in the public health work programme dovetail with work being undertaken by the Communicable Disease, Health and Safety service as part of its proactive and reactive work (*e.g. delivering the Healthy Option Award scheme; providing appropriate infection control advice when interviewing confirmed cases of communicable disease; enforcement of current smoke-free legislation across the region*).

## 2. Overview of the Service

### 2.1 Area profile

**Shared Regulatory Services covers the Council areas of Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan and serves over 600,000 residents.** Extending from St Mellons in the East of Cardiff to Maesteg in the west, the area encompasses Cardiff, the capital City of Wales with its array of cultural, financial and commercial organisations and the rural areas of Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan with their vibrant tourist and agricultural economies.



**Bridgend is situated on the south coast straddling the M4 corridor.** It comprises an area of 28,500 hectares and a population of just over 140,000 residents. To the north of the M4, the area consists of mainly ex-coal mining valley communities with Maesteg as the main centre of population. To the south of the M4, the ex-market town of Bridgend is the largest town, the hub of the economy and its employment base. To the south west on the coast lies Porthcawl, a traditional seaside resort, a traditional seaside resort with a high proportion of elderly residents, which is subject to a major influx of tourists during the summer period.



**Cardiff is the capital city of Wales and is continuing to grow faster than any other capital city in Europe.** In population terms, it is the largest city in Wales with a population of 360,000. Measures of population however, belies Cardiff's significance as a regional trading and business centre. The population swells by approximately 70,000 daily with commuters and visitors. Cardiff is the seat of government and the commercial, financial and administrative centre of Wales. Cardiff boasts one of the most vibrant city centres in the UK and on a typical weekend, Cardiff's night time economy can attract over 40,000 people and sometimes more than 100,000 when the City's Millennium Stadium hosts international events.



**The Vale of Glamorgan is bounded to the north by the M4 motorway and to the south by the Severn Estuary.** It covers 33,097 hectares with 53 kilometres of coastline, and a population of over 130,000 residents. The area is predominantly rural in character, but contains several urban areas of note such as Barry, Penarth, Dinas Powys and the historic towns of Cowbridge and Llantwit Major. Barry is the largest town, a key employment area and popular seaside resort. The rural parts of the Vale provide a strong agricultural base together with a quality environment, which is a key part of the area's attraction. The area includes Barry Docks area and Cardiff International Airport.



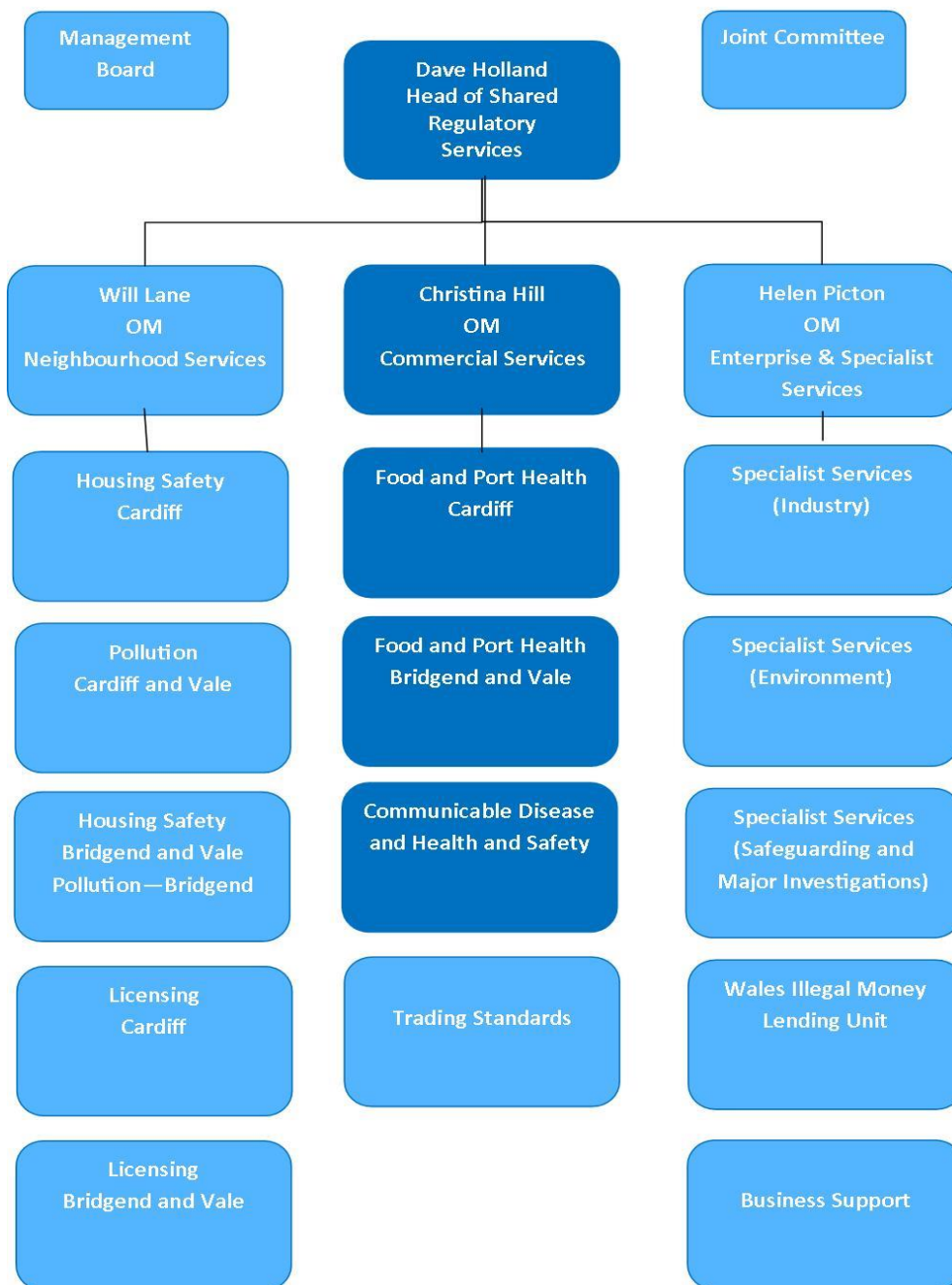


## 2.2 Organisational Structure

Communicable Disease Services are provided by the Commercial Services Team within Shared Regulatory Services. The Teams consists largely of Environmental Health Officers providing services across the three local authority areas. The Vale of Glamorgan Council act as the host authority for the Service with functions associated with this Plan delegated to the Shared Service Joint Committee.

Operational functions within the Service are illustrated in the following table with those that have responsibility for public health issues highlighted in darker blue.

**Shared Regulatory Services Organisational Chart**



## 2.3 Scope of the Communicable Disease Service

A comprehensive health protection and improvement service is delivered by combining surveillance, public health intervention, epidemiological studies, enforcement, advice, training and promotion. Much of the reactive surveillance work forms the foundation for proactive evidence based interventions focused on vulnerable and 'at risk' sectors of our community; in particular young people and the elderly. Examples of proactive interventions undertaken by the service will be detailed later on in this report. Outbreak and cluster investigations also form a significant part of our reactive role.

Shared Regulatory Services, and its Officers, continues to lead nationally on aspects of communicable disease and health protection, most notably since 2018, when the Team Manager was seconded to Welsh Government to lead on the development of the Special Procedures Licensing regime in accordance with the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017. As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020, the Team Manager was re-assigned into the role of Senior Environmental Health advisor for COVID-19 in the Health Protection Policy & Legislation Branch of Welsh Government.

Another Officer from the service also contributes to the national 'task and finish' group for special procedures licensing which, to-date, has assisted in the development of the Level 2 Award in Infection Prevention and Control.

Key services delivered are:

- The investigation of confirmed sporadic and outbreak cases of communicable disease and all actions required as a result of those investigations.
- **During 2020/2021 this has also included the investigation and management of COVID-19 cases in the care and educational sectors, workplaces, returning international travellers and the investigation of clusters.**
- Responding to complaints of suspected food poisoning and infectious disease risks.
- **During 2020/2021 this has also included monitoring businesses to ensure they are operating in a COVID-19 compliant manner and taking enforcement action where duty holders are failing to take reasonable measures to mitigate the risk of transmission.**
- Enforcement of Health Protection legislation including the service of 'Requests for Cooperation', the application for Part 2A Orders and exclusion of infected cases or close contacts from place of work, education or leisure activities.
- **During 2020/2021 this has also included issuing 'Requests for Cooperation' where confirmed cases of COVID-19, or close contacts of confirmed cases, have failed to self-isolate following instruction from Test, Trace and Protect.**
- Lead on local and national communicable disease initiatives, which involve proactive business engagement and partnership working commonly Public Health Wales, Business Wales, Welsh Government and other Council services such as education and corporate health and safety.
- Undertake health promotion and public health interventions (*e.g. Healthy Option Awards; Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Schemes; preparing educational videos*).
- Management and delivery of infection control and nutritional training.

- Assess client consultation and infection control arrangements in businesses registering to undertake skin piercing activities (*tattooing; cosmetic piercing; acupuncture; electrolysis; semi-permanent make-up*).

### Service delivery points

Communicable Disease Services are delivered from all 3 hubs: County Hall, Cardiff; Civic Offices in the Vale and Ravens Court in Bridgend on an agile basis. The Service generally operates office hours from Monday to Friday, with Lead Officers being contactable outside of office hours via the 24 hour emergency service for the investigation and control of communicable diseases of public health significance; such as E. Coli O157, Typhoid and Legionnaires’ disease. Officers will also conduct investigations and case interviews outside of normal office hours for significant pathogens so that the spread of communicable disease in the wider community is controlled as quickly as possible.

The Shared Regulatory Services website provides information on the services provided and the website address is [www.srs.wales/](http://www.srs.wales/)

## 2.4 Resources

### Financial allocation

The expenditure directly involved in providing the Communicable Disease Service for 2021/2022 is included in the Service budget and is considered adequate to ensure the effective delivery of the service under normal circumstances.

### Staffing allocation

The table below indicates the actual number of staff working on Communicable Disease Control and related matters (in terms of full time equivalents FTE).

Position	Function	FTE
Head of Shared Regulatory Services	Management of Shared Regulatory Service.	0.05
Operational Manager Regulatory Commercial Services x 1	Management of Commercial Services	0.10
Team Manager Communicable Disease, Health and Safety (also a designated Lead Officer) x 1	Management and delivery of the Communicable Disease Service.	0.50
Lead Officer for Communicable Disease x 2 1 FT CSO has 50/50 split for H&S : CD work 1 FT CSO has a 30/70 split for H&S : CD work	All aspects of communicable disease investigation, enforcement, control and prevention.	1.2
Commercial Services Officer (Communicable Disease, Health & Safety) x 3 1 FT CSO is currently covering TM role – substantive post not fully covered currently 1 FT CSO has a 50/50 split for H&S : CD work 1 CSO works 4 days a week with an equal split in H&S : CD work	Assist with all aspects of communicable disease investigation, enforcement, control and prevention <i>(additional resource can be diverted to CD function as service demand dictates – as seen in COVID-19 pandemic)</i>	1.4

Commercial Services Technical Officer (Communicable Disease, Health & Safety) x 2 (equal split between health and safety and communicable disease work)	All aspects of communicable disease investigation and enforcement as dictated by training and experience	1.0
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## 2.5 Staff Development and Competency

Shared Regulatory Service’s approach to managing the competency of its employees is through the Workforce Development Plan which provides a structure for developing staff to ensure the right mix of experience, knowledge and skills, and to ensure we get the right number of the right people in the right place at the right time.

The Workforce Development Plan provides a framework to blend:-

- Organisational culture
- Leadership and management
- Core skills
- Recruitment, retention and progression
- Communication and employee engagement
- Employee performance management

To improve business resilience, and bolster the competency of staff in the Communicable Disease, Health and Safety Team, a number of additional Officers were up-skilled during 2019 so that they are now competent using the Tarian database and confident interviewing confirmed cases of illness. This in-house training has, and continues to be, enhanced by Lead Officer and Support Lead Officer training courses as they become available from Public Health Wales.

Workforce development is enhanced through annual performance reviews where the Team Manager identifies personal objectives for each member of the team and assesses training needs for the year ahead. This management tool is further supported by periodic team meetings and regular team contact (*face-to-face discussions; Email communications; on-line TEAMS meetings and telephone calls*).

Professional Development (CPD) is actively encouraged and officers continue to be offered the opportunity to attend a wide range of training courses and webinars, seminars, meetings and briefings to help maintain competency and improve technical, legal and administrative knowledge. Authorised officers are expected to achieve at least 20 hours of CPD each year.

Officers within the Communicable Disease, Health & Safety Team additionally have access to the technical support and expertise of the local CCDC (Consultant in Communicable Disease Control) and Health Protection Team in Public Health Wales, particularly when dealing with outbreaks and clusters of communicable disease, and complex conditions that have a significant impact on the wider community (such as TB; COVID-19).

Lead Officers regularly attend regional communicable disease task group meetings and the all-Wales Expert Panel for communicable disease meetings.

The Service ensures that competency is secured by appointing appropriately qualified and experienced personnel to carry out the communicable disease function. There are specific job descriptions and person specifications for all employees of Shared Regulatory Services and all appointments are made in accordance with the procedures for recruitment and selection.

## 2.6 Challenges for the year ahead

**Challenges presented by rare, emerging and re-emerging pathogens:** The service continues to be presented, both nationally and locally, with challenges associated with rare; emerging and re-emerging pathogens. The main pathogen currently impacting on the service is SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19).

**COVID-19** - The worldwide pandemic of Coronavirus COVID-19, and subsequent 'lockdowns' across the UK, has had a significant impact on the entire service over the last 12 months. Officers have had to rapidly familiarise themselves with new and perpetually changing legislation and guidance; effectively deal with non-compliant businesses to mitigate the risk of community transmission; support closed care settings (*such as nursing and residential care homes*) navigate their way through outbreak situations and implement appropriate infection prevention and control strategies; monitor the health status of in-coming passengers and crew via air and seaports; investigate and manage sporadic cases and clusters in early years settings, schools; higher education establishments and workplaces.

As case numbers of COVID-19 reduce across the region, and 'lockdown' restrictions ease, the service is able to move into recovery phase and return to more substantive work. However, it is acknowledged that the emergence of Variants of Concern and Variants Under Investigation could require the rapid re-alignment of staff to support the Test, Trace and Protect service.

**Legionella** – The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a significant number of buildings and work places across the region either fully closing, or being less frequently occupied, during sequential 'lockdown' periods since March 2020. The increased potential for water stagnation, and implementation of less robust water management controls, could escalate the proliferation of legionella bacteria in hot and cold water systems. A failure to safely recommission water systems could result in an increased number of confirmed cases of Legionnaires Disease in a population already exposed to a virus that compromises respiratory health.

**Tuberculosis (TB)** – The prevalence of TB cases across the SRS region remains a concern. This is predominantly the result of the diverse ethnic profile of the population across all 3 authority areas; a growing number of homeless people, particularly in Cardiff; and both Cardiff and Bridgend possessing large prison populations. The team continued to work closely with Public Health Wales and Housing Services during 2020/2021 to effectively manage the risk of infection to the wider community, and it is anticipated that this trend will continue during the 2021/2022 business year.

**New legislation:** Part 4 of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 requires a mandatory licensing scheme for practitioners and premises carrying out ‘special procedures’ in Wales. This includes carrying on the business of tattooing; cosmetic body piercing; semi-permanent skin colouring; acupuncture and electrolysis. Under this new regulatory regime all practitioners must operate to a prescribed standard to be granted a personal licence, whilst the premises must reach the requisite standard to be approved. Both the licence and approval will be renewable on a 3 yearly basis. A new competency framework will require the practitioner to successfully complete infection control and first aid training, and pass a professional interview, before being issued with their licence. Each Local Authority will also be required to undertake at least 1 unannounced inspection of all approved premises every 3 years to monitor compliance.

Whilst SRS welcomes the introduction of this new robust regulatory regime for ‘special procedures’, the scheme does present a number of significant challenges for SRS that cannot be foreseeably time-tabled at this juncture.

- ✚ Welsh Government is still unable to confirm a date when the new legislation will come into force. Consequently SRS is currently unable to make an accurate business forecast of additional staff/resources necessary to deliver this new regulatory requirement alongside existing work commitments.
- ✚ As a region, SRS has the highest number of skin piercing businesses and practitioners in Wales. The delivery of training, arrangement of professional interviews for all applicants and more regular inspection of premises will have a significant impact on the team’s capacity for other statutory work.
- ✚ Whilst SRS became an approved centre for the delivery of the RSPH level 2 infection control training in 2019/2020, Welsh Government had to delay the ‘train-the-trainer’ course for Officers wishing to deliver the Level 2 course due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✚ Officer guidance on the implementation of Part 4 of the Act has yet to be provided to Local Authorities.

Part 3 of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 enacted the Smoke-Free Premises and Vehicles (Wales) Regulations 2020 which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The legislation widens the range of smoke-free premises to include outdoor care settings for children; school grounds; hospital grounds and public playgrounds. This could result in a higher number of service requests being received by the service for both the provision of advice and investigation of complaints.

**Cardiff’s City Status:** Cardiff is the capital city of Wales, and the largest Local Authority in the Principality; its population of 360,000 swelling by approximately 70,000 each day from commuters, students and visitors. Whilst Cardiff has seen a lower than usual number of visitors and commuters during 2020 as a consequence of COVID-19, the popularity of the city as a leisure and entertainment destination will inevitably see an upsurge in visitor numbers as people favour ‘staycation’ holidays during 2021.

**‘Staycation’ Breaks in the Vale and Bridgend:** The continued uncertainty of being able to enjoy a foreign holiday, and the additional costs associated with quarantine and PCR testing, is likely to see an increase in people enjoying a ‘staycation’ during 2021. This potential upsurge

in visitor numbers to beach and leisure destinations across the Vale and Bridgend could create an increase in the number of food poisoning and communicable disease cases reported across the SRS region that will require investigation by the service.

**Staffing:** The Communicable Disease, Health and Safety team is undergoing another renaissance as staff move onto new challenges; retire and temporary contracts come to a natural end. Whilst recruitment is currently underway, this business year will need to focus on the development of new team members to ensure resilience moving forward.

## 2.7 Action Plan 2021/2022

The following action plan is evidence based and has been developed for 2021/2022 and outlines how through reactive and proactive work the Service will:

1. Improve health and well being
2. Safeguard the vulnerable
3. Support the local economy and
4. Maximise the use of resources

The Communicable Disease and Health Protection Service also contributes to the Section 18 Health and Safety Enforcement Plan, and the Food Law Enforcement Plan, and details of this contribution are contained within those respective documents.

Communicable Disease Action Plan 2021/2022	
Relevant Strategic Priorities	Objective
	Investigate and control sporadic and outbreak notifications of communicable disease and undertake public health interventions to prevent increased incidence of illness and minimise onward transmission
1, 2, 3	<p><b>Q1</b> Undertake timely investigations of sporadic cases of communicable disease; outbreaks and suspected food poisonings, and apply appropriate control and preventative measures.</p> <p>Continue to support businesses and legacy authorities across SRS with infection control training and advice during outbreaks.</p> <p>Support Public Health Wales deal with possible and confirmed cases of COVID-19 that refuse to self-isolate in accordance with current Government requirements (<i>preparation of 'requests to co-operate' or Part 2A Orders under Health Protection legislation</i>).</p> <p>Investigate people and workplaces failing to comply with the requirements of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020 (<i>as amended</i>) and take appropriate enforcement action to mitigate the spread of the virus.</p> <p>Continue to support Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, Local Health Boards, Care Inspectorate for Wales and Social Services prevent and control the spread COVID-19 in closed care settings (<i>e.g. residential care homes</i>)</p>
1, 2, 3	
1, 2	
1, 2	
1, 2, 4	

1, 2, 4		Actively support the Test, Track and Protect programme where required.
1, 2, 4		Prepare guidance for domestic users of hot tubs and spa pools to mitigate the risk of respiratory illness from Legionella.
1, 2,		Prepare proactive intervention to examine how the risk of infection from Campylobacter, Cryptosporidium and E.Coli is being effectively managed and controlled at animal petting establishments across the SRS region.
1, 2, 4		Carry out a desk top review of legionella management controls in privately operated residential care homes to identify high risk settings that require a more focused intervention.
1, 2, 3	Q2	Undertake timely investigations of sporadic cases of communicable disease; outbreaks and suspected food poisonings, and apply appropriate control and preventative measures.
1, 2, 3		Continue to support businesses and legacy authorities across SRS with infection control training and advice during outbreaks.
1, 2		Continue to support Public Health Wales deal with possible and confirmed cases of COVID-19 that are refusing to self-isolate in accordance with current Government requirements ( <i>preparation of 'requests to co-operate' or Part 2A Orders under Health Protection legislation</i> ).
1, 2		Investigate people and workplaces failing to comply with the requirements of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020 ( <i>as amended</i> ) and take appropriate enforcement action to mitigate the spread of the virus.
1, 2, 4		Continue to support Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, Local Health Boards, Care Inspectorate for Wales and Social Services prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 in closed care settings ( <i>e.g. residential care homes</i> )
1, 2, 4		Actively support the Test, Track and Protect programme where required
1, 2		Undertake visits to examine how the risk of infection from Campylobacter, Cryptosporidium and E.Coli is being effectively managed and controlled at animal petting establishments across the SRS region.
1, 2, 4		Undertake a desktop review of completed self-assessment forms to identify how the risk of Legionella in cooling towers across the Cardiff area is being controlled and managed.
1, 2, 3	Q3	Undertake timely investigations of sporadic cases of communicable disease; outbreaks and suspected food poisonings, and apply appropriate control and preventative measures.
1, 2, 3		Continue to support businesses and legacy authorities across SRS with infection control training and advice during outbreaks.
1, 2		Support Public Health Wales deal with possible and confirmed cases of COVID-19 that are refusing to self-isolate in accordance with current Government requirements ( <i>preparation of 'requests to co-operate' or Part 2A Orders under Health Protection legislation</i> ).
1, 2		Continue to support Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, Local Health Boards, Care Inspectorate for Wales and Social Services prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 in closed care settings ( <i>e.g. residential care homes</i> )
1, 2, 4		Actively support the Test, Track and Protect programme where required



1, 2, 4		Proactive intervention to examine how the risk of Legionella is being managed in cooling towers across the Cardiff area, and hot tubs/spa pools on display across Cardiff, Bridgend and Vale of Glamorgan areas.
1, 2, 3	Q4	Undertake timely investigations of sporadic cases of communicable disease; outbreaks and suspected food poisonings, and apply appropriate control and preventative measures.
1, 2, 3		Continue to support businesses and legacy authorities across SRS with infection control training and advice during outbreaks.
1, 2		Support Public Health Wales deal with possible and confirmed cases of COVID-19 that are refusing to self-isolate in accordance with current Government requirements ( <i>preparation of 'requests to co-operate' or Part 2A Orders under Health Protection legislation</i> ).
1, 2		Continue to support Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, Local Health Boards, Care Inspectorate for Wales and Social Services prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 in closed care settings ( <i>e.g. residential care homes</i> )
1, 2, 4		Actively support the Test, Track and Protect programme where required
1, 2		Proactive intervention to monitor compliance with smoke-free legislation in shisha lounges across the SRS region

## 3. Service Delivery and Performance 2020/21

### 3.1 Introduction

The Communicable Disease Service is supported by an active surveillance system managed through the national database, Tarian, which is utilised by all Welsh Local Authorities and Public Health Wales. All information pertaining to communicable disease incidents (*e.g. Norovirus issues in a school or residential care setting*); sporadic cases of notifiable illness and outbreaks are logged on Tarian. Since its introduction Tarian has facilitated more effective communication between stakeholders; supports effective case management; enables early detection of outbreaks and enabled the Authority to more readily identify trends in infectious disease cases.

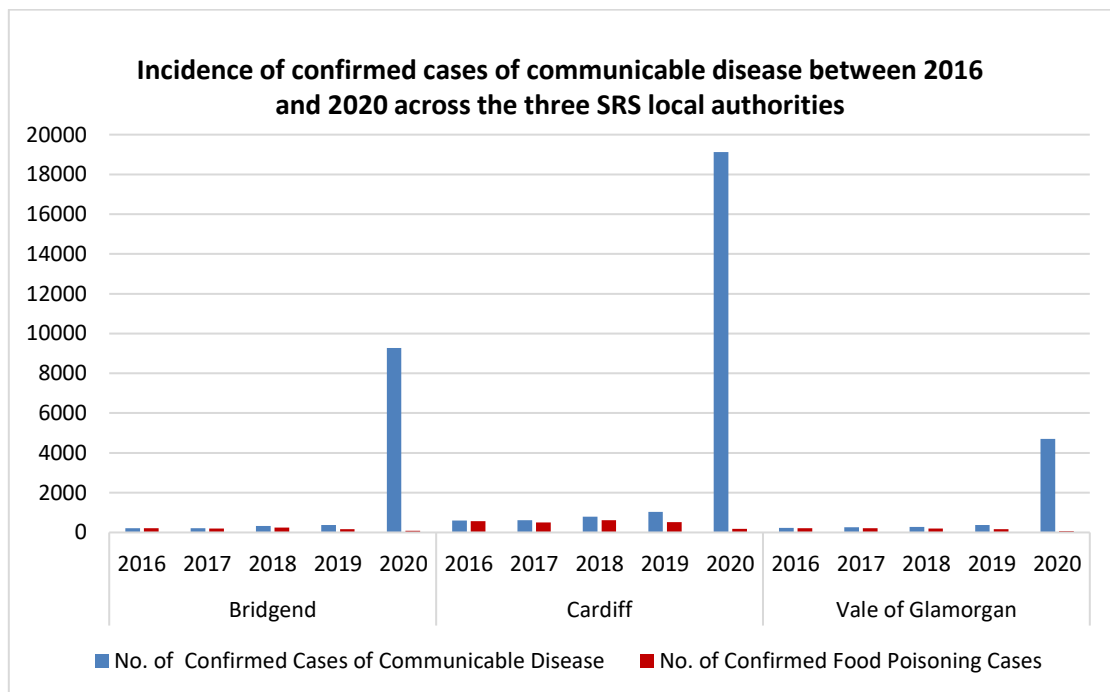
In 2020, 33,297 cases of communicable disease were notified to SRS. Laboratory confirmed communicable diseases accounted for 99% of these (33,108 cases), whilst unconfirmed (suspected) food poisoning accounted for only 1% (189 cases). In comparison to previous years, this is an unprecedented increase and is a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2019 there were 2149 cases, of which 1786 (83%) were laboratory confirmed; in 2018 there were 1707 cases, of which 1389 (81%) were laboratory confirmed and in 2017 there were 1354 cases, of which 1070 (79%) were laboratory confirmed.

The table below shows the number of cases of confirmed and unconfirmed communicable diseases per local authority area in SRS.

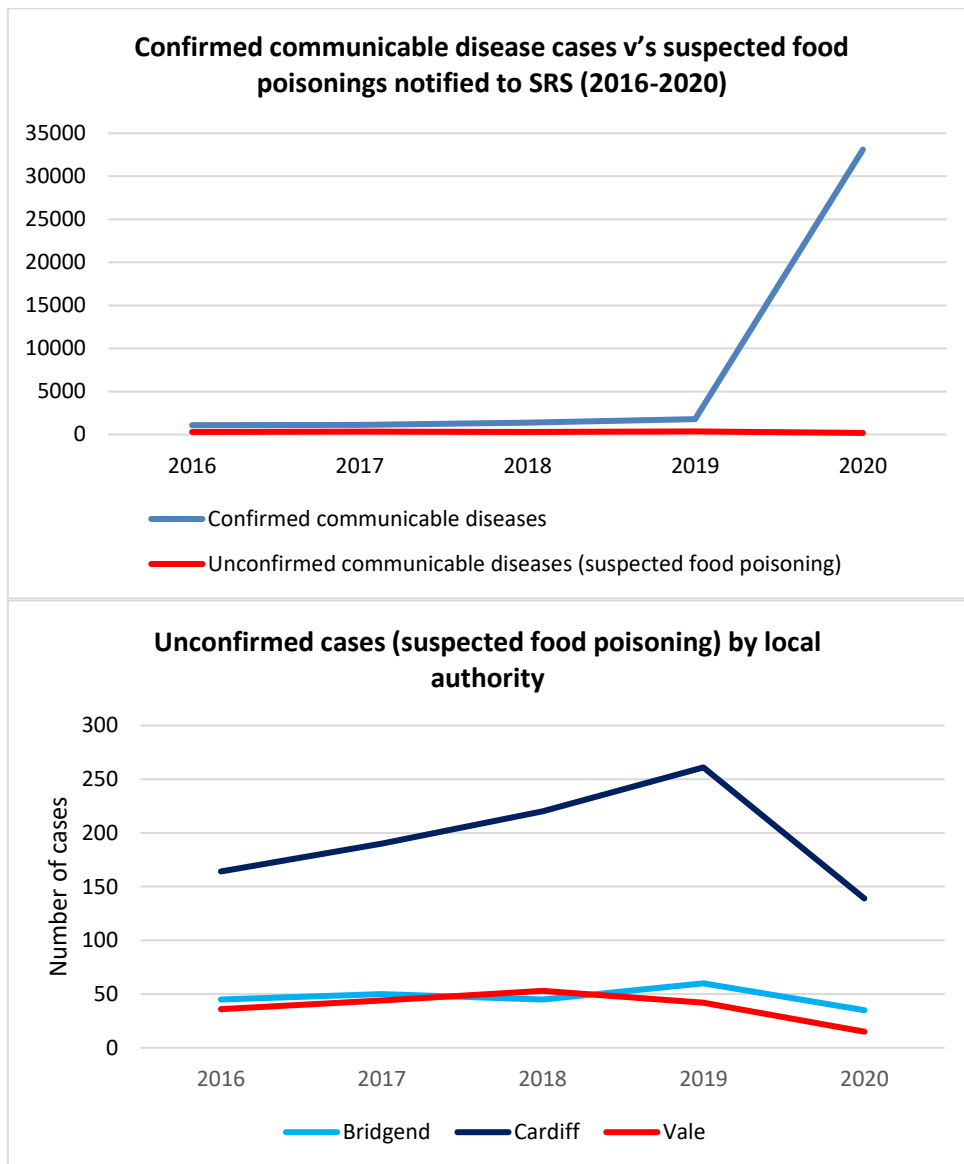
	<b>Confirmed CDs (CFP<sup>1</sup>)</b>	<b>Unconfirmed CDs</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Bridgend</b>	9281 (81)	35	9316
<b>Cardiff</b>	19122 (182)	139	19261
<b>Vale of Glamorgan</b>	4705 (69)	15	4720
<b>Total</b>	<b>33108 (337)</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>33297</b>

CFP<sup>1</sup> = Confirmed food poisoning as applied in the 'Disease' tab in Tarian

The graph below illustrates the incidence of notified cases of communicable disease across Bridgend, Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan between 2016 and 2020. PCR testing in the microbiology laboratories since June 2018 has resulted in an upward trend in cases. The substantial increase observed in 2020 is a direct result of the number of COVID-19 cases reported across the region.



Confirmed food poisoning cases = as applied in the 'Disease' tab in Tarian.



The graphs above illustrate that the reporting of confirmed cases of communicable disease across SRS have seen a significant upsurge as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic; however, unconfirmed cases of illness (*i.e. suspected food poisoning cases*) have decreased.

A decline in the number of reported suspected food poisoning cases is observed across all three local authorities. The nature of these cases usually involves a complainant visiting a commercial food business and subsequently alleging that business has caused them illness. The decline in numbers can almost certainly be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and 'lockdown' periods initiated in March, October and December 2020, during which commercial food businesses either closed completely or were only able to offer a takeaway service for approximately 4½ months of 2020.

## 3.2 Performance activities

The investigation of confirmed sporadic and outbreak cases of communicable disease require a reactive service and our performance indicator therefore reflects this by measuring response times to notifications.

### Sporadic cases

The Notification Guidance ('expert rules') made under the Health Protection (Notification) (Wales) Regulations 2010 dictates the response times required to be taken by Local Authorities investigating cases of communicable disease. All cases of confirmed communicable disease notified to SRS are responded to and every effort is made to undertake a full investigation by carrying out case interviews. The target response time for contacting the case is dependent on the public health significance of the pathogen concerned; as detailed in the table below.

#### L.A. target response times for common communicable disease pathogens

Pathogen	Response time
Campylobacter	Within 48 hours (unless part of a cluster or outbreak)
Cryptosporidium	Within 24 hours (same day if an outbreak)
Giardia	Within 24 hours (same day if part of an outbreak)
Salmonella spp.	Within 24 hours (same day if part of an outbreak, or case is a food handler/works in a closed community such as a care home) Salmonella typhoid or paratyphoid – Within 4 hours
E. coli O157	Within 4 hours
Hepatitis A	Within 4 hours
Hepatitis E	Within 48 hours
Shigella	Shigella sonnei – Within 24 hours; other Shigella sp. - Within 4 hours
Legionella spp.	Within 4 hours

*Response times were reviewed in October 2018*

A review of the response rates of cases (% of notified cases that were interviewed) across the 3 local authorities for Campylobacter were reviewed and compared to the previous 4 years.

#### **Campylobacter response rates 2020 (2019 figures shown in red as a comparison)**

	Bridgend	Cardiff	Vale	SRS Total
<b>Cases interviewed</b>	153 (161)	315 (497)	126 (168)	594 (826)
<b>Total cases</b>	183 (187)	413 (576)	163 (191)	759 (954)
<b>Response rate</b>	84% (86%)	76% (86%)	77% (88%)	78% (87%)

### A comparison of response rates from 2016 to 2020

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
<b>Bridgend</b>	84%	86%	92%	96%	97%
<b>Cardiff</b>	76%	86%	91%	93%	94%
<b>Vale</b>	77%	88%	92%	97%	96%

Although a response rate of 78% across the whole of SRS for Campylobacter investigation continues to remain respectable, there has been a gradual decline in the response rate achieved over the past 5 years. This can be accounted for as a result of staff changes (*9 personnel changes in a 3 year period*); the team carrying a number of vacant posts; the COVID-19 pandemic and a reduction in capacity to follow up non-responding cases.

During 2020 officers in the Communicable Disease, Health and Safety Team were tasked with overseeing COVID-19 cases in the care and educational sectors; assisting the Test, Trace and Protect service alongside key substantive duties. Due to capacity constraints, this resulted in Campylobacter cases being sent advice sheets and postal questionnaires in place of a telephone interview. As a methodology for data capture, postal questionnaires return a lower response rate to telephone surveys which has contributed to the lower response rate seen for 2020 (*BMC Medical Research Methodology, August 2012 – telephone survey response rate 30.2%; personalised postal questionnaire response rate 10.5%; generic postal questionnaire response rate 7.5%*).

### Campylobacter Infection

The incidence of Campylobacter infection throughout SRS far exceeds other notifiable diseases, as illustrated in the table below, which reflects the national trend observed across the UK. The reason for such high numbers of cases is the wide range of risk factors associated with Campylobacter, which may include: foreign travel; consumption of undercooked poultry and poultry offal (*i.e. 'pink' chicken livers*); consumption of unpasteurised dairy products; consumption of contaminated drinking or leisure water; contact with animals/birds and their faeces; domestic sewerage problems and close contact with an infected person (*i.e. changing nappies of an infected child*) and subsequent poor hand hygiene. Campylobacter also has a low infective dose, meaning a person only has to ingest very small quantities to induce illness.

More recently identified risk factors associated with cases of Campylobacter have been feeding pet animals raw food (meat); the accidental consumption of raw/part-cooked chicken products (*e.g. chicken popcorn*) and the practice of washing raw chicken packaging for recycling (*where the bacteria becomes splashed onto adjacent surfaces and subsequently transferred onto hands, ready-to-eat foods or other equipment*).

Campylobacter remains an important public health risk. The pathogen has multiple risk factors in addition to having a low infective dose, meaning that a person only needs to be exposed to a small amount of the bacteria to become ill. It is therefore critical that the communicable disease service retains the requisite level of resource to be able to effectively investigate all confirmed cases in a timely manner.

The following table details the incidence of confirmed communicable disease cases across SRS between 2016 and 2020.

	Bridgend					Cardiff					Vale				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Campylobacter	173	164	198	187	183	385	400	491	576	413	164	177	174	191	163
Salmonella	13	23	22	13	13	60	50	56	54	14	16	27	11	17	6
Cryptosporidium	12	5	11	17	7	71	22	35	52	37	18	11	17	9	15
Giardia	1	0	23	28	11	39	34	41	69	35	7	5	12	36	11
E. coli O157	1	1	0	2	3	2	1	0	4	1	2	1	0	0	1
E. coli non O157*			16	24	10			27	46	21			6	18	10
Hepatitis E	2	2	2	5	1	4	5	5	3	1	4	3	2	2	1
Hepatitis A	0	0	3	0	0	3	5	2	1	4	0	1	1	7	1
Listeria	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0
Legionella	2	3	2	3	3	3	4	3	8	2	0	2	8	5	3
Shigella	0	1	2	1	0	3	4	12	15	3	0	0	7	4	3
COVID-19 **					9021					18530					4461
Other	8	11	43	98	29	31	81	118	201	58	9	25	39	88	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>9282</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>1030</b>	<b>19121</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>4705</b>

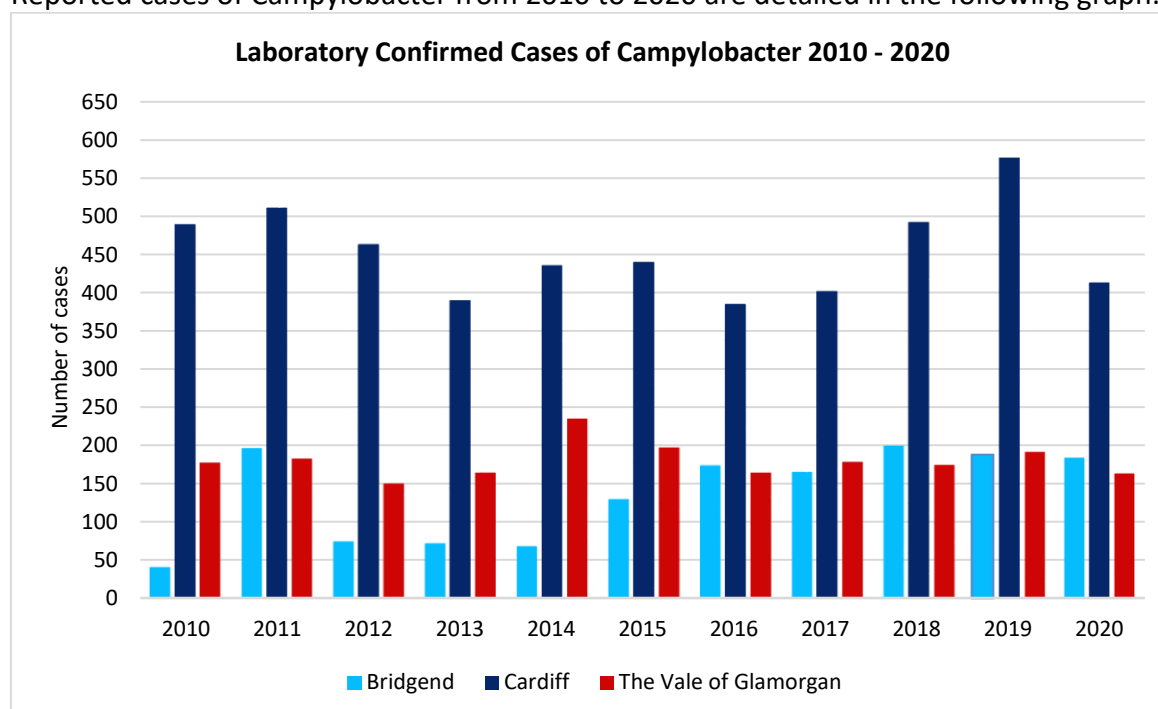
\*June/July 2018 onwards (due to changes in laboratory testing methods this is now being reported to SRS)

\*\* May 2020 onwards COVID-19 cases were reported to SRS

NB. 'Other' includes Entamoeba histolytica/dispar, Borrelia burgdorferi (Lyme disease), Leptospira, Vibrio cholera, Taenia, Cyclospora, Clostridium perfringens, Mycobacterium chelonae and Norovirus. In 2020, diseases in 'Other' include Norovirus, Borrelia burgdorferi and Entamoeba histolytica.

### Reported cases of Campylobacter from 2010 - 2020

Reported cases of Campylobacter from 2010 to 2020 are detailed in the following graph.



The number of Campylobacter cases in Bridgend has seen little change over the last few years. Cardiff however, saw a significant decline of around 150 cases in 2020 whilst the Vale of Glamorgan saw a minor decrease in cases from 2019 to 2020.

Explanations for the decrease in cases across both Cardiff and the Vale include:

- Fewer people presenting at their GP surgery during the pandemic;
- Less people getting infected as a result of significantly fewer visits to commercial food businesses and other type of businesses, such as animal petting farms;
- People performing more regular and thorough hand washing as a result of public health messaging associated with the COVID-19 pandemic;
- More prevalent use of hand sanitiser gels during the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the “Hands-Face-Space” public health intervention.

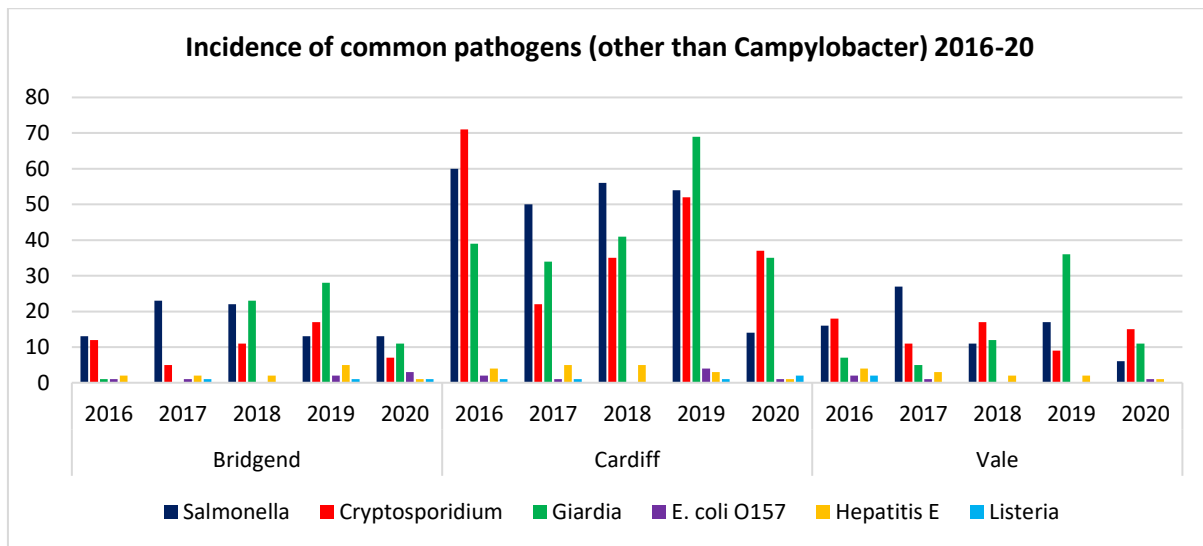
### **Pathogens of Public Health Significance Investigated by SRS**

Pathogens of public health significance (other than Campylobacter) commonly require more detailed investigation; either because the pathogen can be readily spread within the community, or because of the seriousness of the infection. The need to complete enhanced interview questionnaires to identify close contacts of a case, and/or potentially instigate wider public health interventions, is particularly true for pathogens such as: Shigella; Hepatitis A and E; E.coli O157; Legionella and Giardia. This will usually require an Officer to interview the case face-to-face, instead of by telephone, and will often necessitate arranging faecal pots from close contacts to identify if the infection has spread in a particular setting.

*e.g. Vaccination of close contacts to Hepatitis A cases; Ensuring confirmed cases of Giardiasis receive appropriate antibiotic treatment from their GP; Ensuring that cases working with food or vulnerable people only return to work after the satisfying the relevant microbiological clearance requirement; Formally excluding cases working with food or vulnerable people from work until microbiological clearance has been confirmed.*

Contrary to the general public perception, most communicable diseases are not necessarily caused from consuming contaminated food; despite the case having traditional ‘food poisoning’ symptoms. Risk factors are often associated with the consumption of (or exposure to) contaminated water; direct contact with animals and/or their faeces; close contact with an infected person (including sexual contact).

The graph below illustrates the incidence of common pathogens (other than Campylobacter) that have caused illness across SRS between 2016 and 2020.



All pathogens have seen a decline in reported cases across SRS during 2020. The reasons for this are likely to be the same as those previously discussed for Campylobacter. Other relevant factors include the significantly reduced opportunity for person-to-person transmission during the 'lockdown' periods in 2020 (*particularly for Giardia and Cryptosporidium*), and the closure of venues such as swimming pools and animal petting farms (*a common exposure source for Cryptosporidium*).

### **COVID-19 Virus (SARS-CoV-2)**

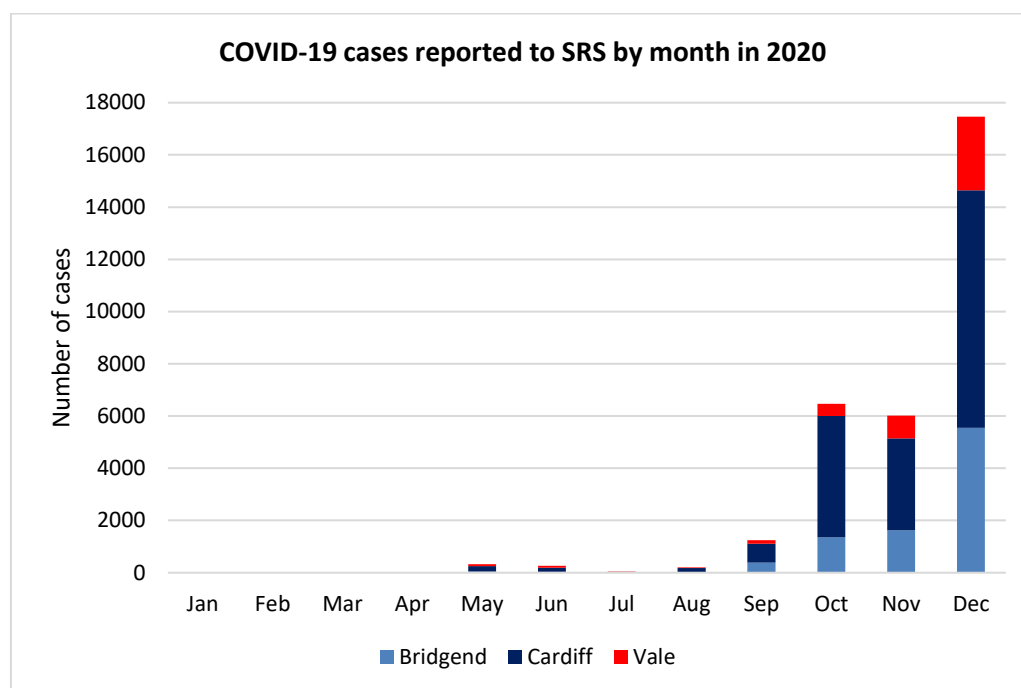
The first case of COVID-19 in Wales presented in an individual who had recently returned from travel in Italy and was reported in February 2020. The first confirmed case of community transmission in Wales was identified in March 2020; however, the notification of cases for residents in the SRS region did not happen until May 2020. For this reason there are no cases noted on the next graph for the first 4 months of the year.

Due to an initial shortage of tests only hospitalised cases were tested at the onset of the pandemic in the UK. The testing of healthcare; social care and critical workers were subsequently prioritised before PCR testing became routinely available to the general public later in 2020. This higher testing capability in the second half of the year contributed to the significant upsurge of confirmed cases reported to SRS.

The dramatic increase in cases observed from October to December coincided with the return to face-to-face learning in primary and secondary education. Being the colder months of the year meant more people were mixing in indoor environments, often with inadequate ventilation, a lack of face coverings and insufficient social distancing due to limited space. The combination of these factors contributed to more rapid community transmission; especially in December when the region first encountered the more infectious Alpha (Kent) Variant of the virus.



The graph below illustrates the number of COVID-19 cases reported to SRS each month during 2020.



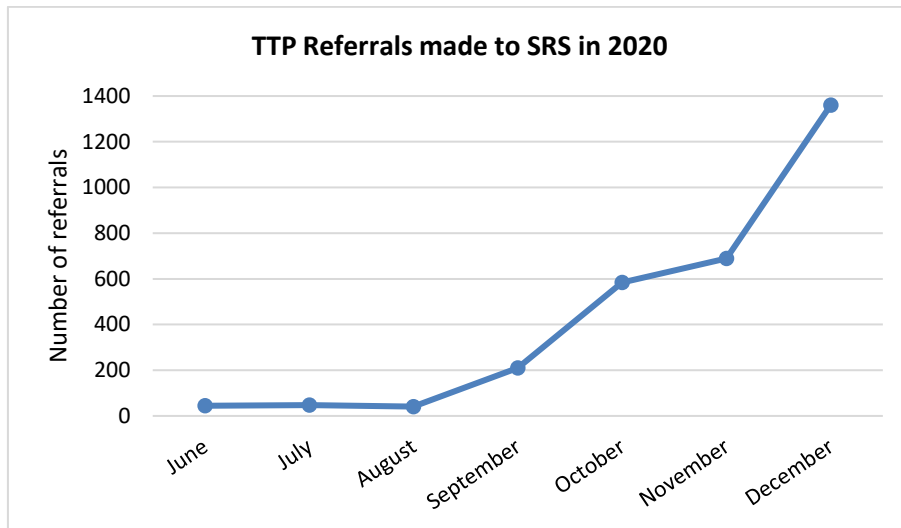
**COVID-19 reporting via Tarian began in May 2020; lockdown 1 started on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020**

### Test, Trace and Protect Work

The Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) service in Wales was set up in each Health Board region in June 2020. Officers across SRS were deployed into the regional and clinical lead teams alongside colleagues from Public Health Wales and the Local Health Boards to investigate and manage clusters in workplaces; educational settings from early years to higher education; shared housing and across the care sector.

The commitment made by SRS during the year to support the Test, Trace and Protect Scheme (TTP) has been hugely significant. Senior officers have been at the heart of the TTP initiative from the outset working across two health boards (*Cardiff & Vale University Health Board and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board*), whilst 30+ officers have been redeployed at various times of the year to work on the scheme. This has involved the tracing of people who have tested positive for Covid-19 and linking with health professionals to identify trends and incidents to restrict the spread of the disease. During the year incidence rates were closely monitored so that the SRS input into TTP could be tailored accordingly. This allowed demand to be met during the upsurge of case numbers, particularly during the second wave of the pandemic, and enabling staff to re-focus efforts on their substantive roles during quieter times.

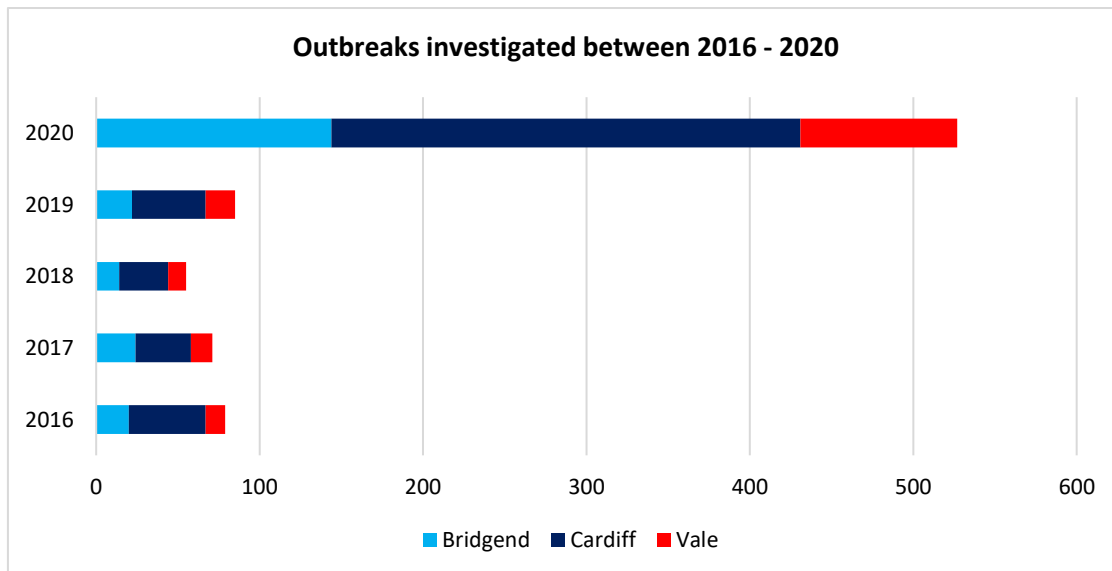
Between June 2020 and March 2021 officers in the Communicable Disease, Health and Safety Team alone received, actioned and managed **4,522** referrals relating to the care sector, schools and early years settings. The rapid upsurge of cases during the autumn months when face-to-face education resumed is illustrated in the following graph.



### **Outbreaks in 2020**

Throughout 2020 a total of 527 outbreaks were investigated by the Communicable Disease, Health and Safety team compared with 85 in 2019 and 55 in 2018. This significant increase in case numbers for 2020 can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, with 95% of cases being confirmed cases of SARS-CoV-2.

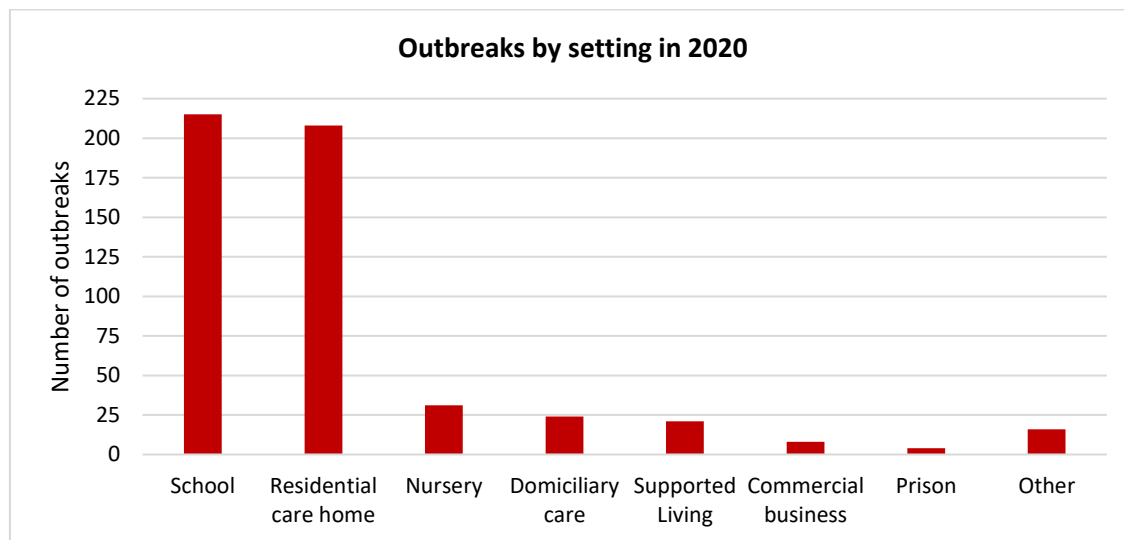
For COVID-19 an outbreak was defined as two or more confirmed cases, or clinically suspected cases, among individuals associated with a specific setting with onset dates within 14 days (1 incubation period) of each other.



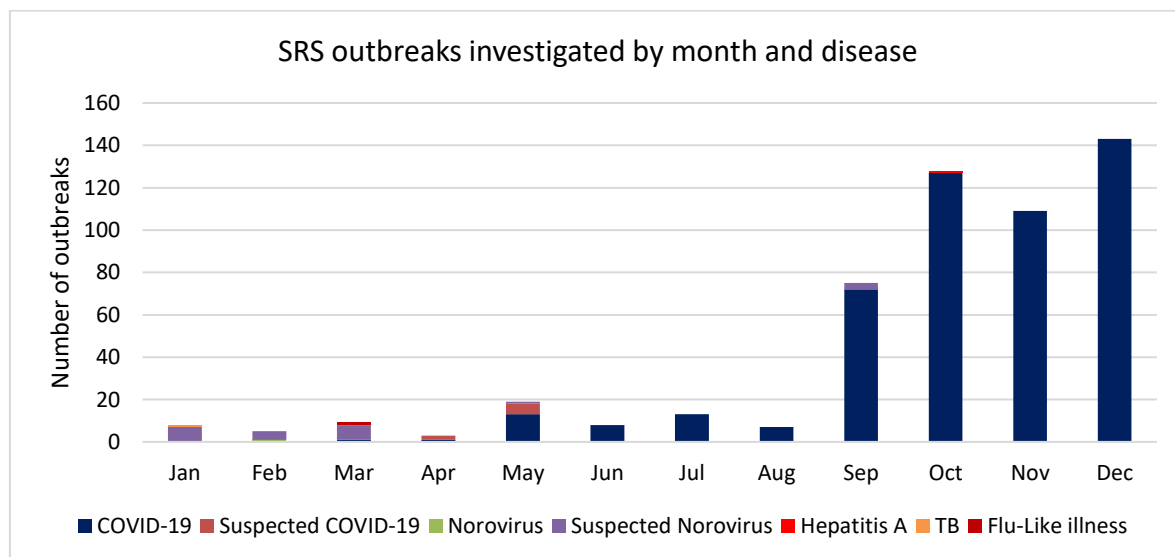
The distribution of outbreaks across the SRS region in 2020 did reflect a similar pattern to that seen in previous years (see previous graph) albeit in larger numbers; with a total of 287 (55%) in Cardiff; 144 in Bridgend (27%) and 96 (18%) in the Vale of Glamorgan.

COVID-19 accounted for 501 (95%) of all outbreaks investigated by the service. A total of 23 (4%) outbreaks were either confirmed or suspected Norovirus; with the remaining 3 outbreaks relating to cases of Hepatitis A, Tuberculosis and a flu-like illness.

Unsurprisingly the sectors reporting the most significant number of outbreaks were education and care, with schools reporting 215 (41%) outbreaks and care homes reporting 208 (39%). Other settings reporting clusters of cases included a youth hostel, homeless centres, day centres, dental surgery, social club, linked residential addresses and a hen party.



The graph below illustrates the dramatic rise in outbreaks investigated between September and December as schools returned to face-to-face learning and case numbers significantly increased in the community.



Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, the 3 Lead Officers for Communicable Disease attended a total of 39 Outbreak Control Meetings for COVID-19 in prison settings across the SRS region.

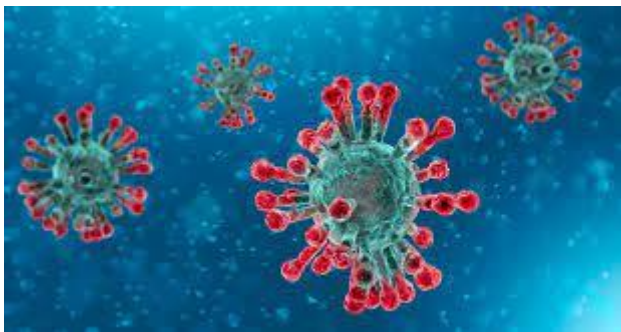
## 3.3 Achievements & Public Health Interventions

### Managing the Risk of Legionella in Water Systems – Improving health and wellbeing; safeguarding the vulnerable; maximise the use of resources



Prior to the re-opening of businesses during the summer of 2020 following the first COVID-19 lockdown, SRS produced Legionella guidance for mothballed and less frequently occupied buildings. This guidance was accessible to duty holders on the SRS website and could be shared with duty holders during site visits.

### Business Engagement – Infection Control Advice to Duty Holders



During the early phase of the first lockdown in the UK, Officers in the Communicable Disease, Health and Safety team proactively contacted all care homes across the SRS region to carry out telephone audits of providers' infection prevention and control (IP&C) arrangements to ensure they were aligned with Public Health Wales (PHW) guidance and were adequately robust to

mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. Each telephone audit took between 1 – 2 hours, depending on the size and complexity of the setting. By 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 the team had completed a total of 198 telephone audits with care settings across the SRS region: Bridgend (51); Cardiff (93) and Vale of Glamorgan (54). In March 2021 this also included a visit to a Cardiff based residential care home with Care Inspectorate Wales to review IP&C measures following an escalation of concerns.

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To further support care home operators during the pandemic, Lead Officers for each of the Bridgend, Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan areas would attend provider support meetings alongside PHW and local health board colleagues; Care Inspectorate Wales and local authority commissioning team for adult and children services once a setting had gone into incident mode after reporting confirmed cases of COVID-19. This would enable the provider to ask questions

and seek advice about their IP&C measures, testing, visits to the home and the ability to take new admissions into the setting. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 the 3 Lead Officers for Communicable Disease attended a total of 93 care home support meetings: Bridgend (34); Cardiff (41) and Vale (18).

The Communicable Disease, Health and Safety team additionally produced guidance on enhanced cleaning and disinfection to help duty holders understand the importance of reviewing their procedures when a symptomatic person had been in their setting, and the significance of ensuring the correct dilution and contact time. This was available to duty holders on the SRS website and was also circulated to educational and early years settings and indoor play centres. The Joint Enforcement Teams also provided the guidance to hoteliers on application to open to support key workers during the initial phase of the pandemic.

### **Business Engagement – Nutritional Training and Healthy Options Award**



The award continues to be offered across the 3 authority areas and is administered by the Communicable Disease, Health and Safety Team.

The Healthy Option Award aims to encourage food businesses to provide healthier options to customers via the introduction of healthier catering practices; increasing the amount of fruit, vegetables and starchy carbohydrates on the menu; decreasing saturated fat, sugar and salt content in the food offered. The scheme also recognises the provision of healthy options for children; rewards staff training; and the promotion and marketing of healthier options. During 2020/2021, 1 new silver award was issued in Cardiff (Vegetarian Food Studio).

Nutritional training supports the uptake and sustainment of the healthy option award in food businesses across the 3 authority areas, and consequently SRS continues to provide level 1 community food and nutritional skill training courses on request. The aim of the training is to increase knowledge and skills in food and nutrition, particularly about the components of a balanced diet and how good nutrition can influence a person's health status.

SRS is a member of, and continues to support, the Cardiff, Vale and Bridgend Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Schemes (CHaSPS) and Gold Standards Health Snack Award advisory group. The communicable disease service provides infection control advice and support to its members as necessary, and reinforces the infection control message via attendance at events the group organises.

### **Oversight of Exhumations in SRS.**

Between 01/04/2020 and 31/03/2021, Officers from the Communicable Disease, Health and Safety Team were required to attend 1 exhumation across the SRS region (Cardiff 1). In accordance with the provisions of the Burial Act 1857, Environmental Health was notified of the exhumation, via a Ministry of Justice licence, to take any necessary actions in the interests of public health and decency. This required Officer attendance at the time of the exhumation.

### **Skin Piercing Registrations – Improving health and wellbeing**

Officers from the Communicable Disease, Health and Safety Team routinely carry out skin piercing registration visits, for both premises and practitioners, in accordance with the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 and bye-laws made thereunder. The legislation requires all duty holder carrying on the business of tattooing; semi-permanent skin colouring; cosmetic body piercing; acupuncture and electrolysis to be registered with their respective Local Authority and to operate in compliance with bye-laws specifically sanctioned by that Local Authority.

These visits focus on procedural infection control provisions; assess client consultation arrangements to ensure that the risk of contraindications is minimised; and ensure that the structure of all treatment areas will facilitate effective cleaning and disinfection.



During 2020/2021 Officers carried out **69** skin piercing registration visits across SRS: Bridgend (24); Cardiff (36); Vale of Glamorgan (9).

### **Requests to Co-operate under Health Protection Legislation – Improving health and wellbeing; safeguarding the vulnerable**

In accordance with Regulation 8 of the Health Protection (Local Authority Powers) (Wales) Regulations 2010, Local Authorities have the power to request individuals or groups to co-operate with the Authority for health protection purposes. The 'request to co-operate' is to prevent / protect against / control / provide a public health response to an incidence or spread of infection, or contamination which presents / could present significant harm to health. From an operational perspective this power would be used to exclude an infected person from returning to work with food or vulnerable persons (*i.e. under 5's; over 65's; immunocompromised persons*); to prevent the continuation of an activity that could result in the infection of other people; or to restrict the activities of an infected person so that the risk of spread to the wider community is controlled.

During the 2020/2021 business year, the Communicable Disease, Health and Safety Team issued **11** 'requests to co-operate' under Regulation 8: **9** were served in relation to COVID-19; **1** confirmed case of Giardia were excluded from work until the requisite clearance had been achieved and **1** was served on a person performing tattooing in a premises that was not fit for purpose.

### **Covid 19 Enforcement – Improving health and wellbeing; safeguarding the vulnerable; maximise the use of resources**

When the UK was put into lockdown in March 2020 it became the responsibility of SRS to enforce the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations across the region. As a consequence SRS officers have throughout the year undertaken 4500+ visits to businesses to establish if restrictions are being complied with and to offer guidance and advice. These

visits included checks to ensure those businesses that were required to close, were closed, that adequate social distancing measures and signage were in place and that hand sanitiser was made available. If it was found that businesses were failing to meet the regulations, statutory notices were issued compelling businesses to comply. In total SRS officers issued 419 such notices for non-compliance across the region, including Closure Notices, Improvement Notices, Prohibition Notices, Compliance Notices and Fixed Penalty Notices depending upon the current regulations in place at the time. Two prosecutions were also instigated during the year. As regulations changed, and case numbers increased, SRS put in place a reciprocal commitment with South Wales Police to form three Joint Enforcement Teams (JET) undertaking coordinated enforcement activity in a range of sectors across each of the three local authority areas. These teams made up of SRS officers and colleagues from each of the 3 local authorities focus upon engaging with business, encouraging compliance and most recently upon ensuring that returning travellers observe the isolation requirements.

### 3.4 Customer Evaluation Forms

Once officers have interviewed a confirmed case of communicable disease, the customer is routinely sent an evaluation questionnaire, alongside an advice sheet about what has made them ill, in order to gauge their opinion of the service provided and identify likely changes in behaviour after discussing their illness with an officer.

#### **Feedback from all cases:**

The response rate for returned evaluation forms in 2020 remained low at 11 %. This was lower than the numbers observed in 2019 (13%); 2018 (20%) and 2017 (21%).

With officer work re-prioritised during 2020 because of the pandemic, fewer evaluation forms were sent out compared to previous years.

A total of 28 evaluation forms were received; however, some had missing answers to a number of questions.

- 27/27 (100%) cases reported being 'satisfied' with the service, of which 23/27 (85 %) reported being 'very satisfied'.
- 28/28 (100%) cases reported that the advice given by officers was useful and 27/27 (100%) reported the advice was easy to understand.
- 13/27 (48%) cases reported changing their food preparation practices or choices as a result of the interview.
- 28/28 (100%) cases reported that the officers performance was good, of which 26/28 (93%) reported that the officers performance was very good.
- 25/27 (93%) of cases said that they were better able to prevent future infections
- 25/26 (96%) said that the officer could not have done any more to improve the quality of the interview.

# Appendix A - Corporate priorities of partner local authorities

## Bridgend County Borough Council



### Priorities

- Supporting a successful sustainable economy
- Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient
- Smarter use of resources

### Outcomes/Aims

- Improve learner outcomes
- Growth and prosperity
- Developing and enhancing community support and services
- Build resilient communities
- Better health and well-being
- Transforming the Council’s estate
- Areas of corporate change
- Decarbonisation and environmental sustainability

## City of Cardiff Council



### Priorities

- Cardiff is a great place to grow up
- Cardiff is a great place to grow older
- Supporting people out of poverty
- Safe, confident and empowered communities
- A Capital City that works for Wales
- Cardiff grows in a resilient way
- Modernising and integrating our public services
- Managing the Covid-19 pandemic

### Outcomes/Aims

- Cardiff is a great place to grow up
- Cardiff is a great place to grow older
- Supporting people out of poverty
- Safe, confident and empowered communities
- A Capital City that works for Wales
- Cardiff grows in a resilient way
- Modernising and integrating our public services
- Managing the Covid-19 pandemic

## Vale of Glamorgan Council



### Priorities

- To work with and for our communities
- To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth
- To support people at home and in their community
- To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment

### Outcomes/Aims

- Inclusive and Safe
- Environmentally Responsible and Prosperous
- Aspirational and Culturally Vibrant
- Active and Healthy



## Appendix 5 - Summary of cases concluding between April and the end of August 2021

The following prosecution cases arising from investigations conducted across the Shared Service, have been concluded recently.

Case	Court date	Offence(s)	Outcome
1	6.4.21	Visits by SRS officers to this food business on 14 <sup>th</sup> January and 13 <sup>th</sup> February 2021 highlighted a number of food hygiene offences including a failure to adequately control pests on the premises. Both the company and its Director were charged with offences,	Both defendants pleaded guilty and sentenced as follows. The company was fined £3666 and ordered to pay costs of £250 together with a victim surcharge of £190; while the Director was fined £1066 and ordered to pay costs of £250 together with a victim surcharge of £106
2	22.4.21	A local horse breeder stood trial after pleading not guilty to 31 animal cruelty offences and one offence of obstruction under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The charges related to cruelty against a flock of Jacob sheep in August 2019, and also cruelty to horses kept on three different sites in January 2020. The suffering caused to the animals and the conditions in which they were being kept meant that all the sheep and a total of 240 horses had to be seized under the Animal Welfare Act.  His partner was the co-defendant in the case, and had previously pleaded guilty to the same 31 animal cruelty offences.	The first defendant was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment and was given a lifetime disqualification from keeping any animals. At a subsequent hearing, the matter of costs was resolved with the defendant being ordered to pay costs amounting to £450,000.  His co-defendant was sentenced to a 12 week custodial sentence, suspended for 12 months, with a requirement to wear an electronic tag for the duration of the 12 weeks, and be subject to a night time (9pm – 6am curfew) during that time. She was also given a lifetime disqualification from keeping any animals (other than some existing, specified pets).
3	4.5.21	This case arises from an inspection of a food takeaway business in August 2019 at which SRS officers highlighted a number of food hygiene offences including a failure to adequately control pests. The defendant pleaded guilty to all the four charges against him, and it was noted that he had been warned more than once and his offending had posed	The defendant was sentenced to 4 months imprisonment, concurrent on all matters, suspended for 18 months. He was ordered to complete 80 hours unpaid work and to pay costs of £750 together with a victim surcharge of £122

		a serious risk to public health.	
4	19.5.21	In this case, the owner of a convenience store was charged with a string food hygiene offences after SRS Officers found dreadful conditions on the premises. The company of which the store owner is the director was also charged with the same offences. The court heard that officers had found a dead mouse and a cockroach infestation, unwrapped raw meat being stored next to fresh herbs and vegetables and out of date and mouldy foods. The defendant had been previously prosecuted for food hygiene matters and also for the supply if illegal tobacco; as a result he knew the serious nature of the offences. The District Judge took the view that culpability was very high and there had been a flagrant disregard for the law. His food hygiene practices were very poor. There was a high risk of an adverse effect and serious risk to public health. The defendant's position was aggravated by the previous convictions and breach of a conditional discharge.	The Company was given a total fine of £20,000 The individual was sentenced to a total of 13 months imprisonment to begin immediately. The court also made him subject to a Hygiene Prohibition Order preventing him from participating in the management of any food business.
5	21.5.21	The case concerns a beauty and cosmetics outlet that remained open during the initial COVID19 lockdown in 2020, when it was not permitted to be open. The owner of the business was prosecuted under the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations.	The defendant did not attend court and the case against him was proved in his absence. He was fined a total of £1320 and ordered to pay costs of £300 together with a victim surcharge of £132

6	21.5.21	<p>This case involved a rogue trader who took £900 from for a resident tin return for carrying out repairs to a paved area in the garden. The defendant carried out no work and when later questioned about the matter disputed the amount of money involved. He had previously been warned by SRS about his trading practices yet in this case he still omitted his name, address and work details on paperwork, failed to advise consumers of their right to cancel the contract and he gave an incorrect address.</p>	<p>The defendant pleaded guilty to offences under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations. He was fined a total of £420 and ordered to pay costs of £325 together with a victim surcharge of £42.</p> <p>He was also ordered to pay £900 compensation to the resident within 7 days. He had already deposited the money with his solicitor so that it could be paid directly to the court.</p>
7	4.6.21	<p>The defendant was the Premises Licence Holder at a retail outlet. He pleaded guilty to two offences under the Licensing Act 2003 in respect of the sale of alcohol to a person under the age of 18 years in December 2019.</p>	<p>He was fined £420 and ordered to pay costs of £220 together with a victim surcharge of £40.</p>
8	4.6.21	<p>The defendant company and its Director were charged with 5 offences under the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Wales) Regulations 2006 and the Housing Act 2004. There was a failure to attend court and the defendants were found guilty in their absence.</p>	<p>Both defendants were fined £2200 and each ordered to pay £225 in costs together with a victim surcharge of £190.</p>
9	2.7.21	<p>In March 2020 officers from the Shared Regulatory Services visited the defendant's mobile food vehicle to carry out a food hygiene inspection. Following the inspection, the defendant's food business was issued with a food hygiene rating of 1, indicating that improvement was necessary. On a return visit in May 2020, officers discovered that the defendant had failed</p>	<p>The defendant was fined £400 for failing to display the correct Food Hygiene rating of 1 and a further £500 fine was imposed for displaying the invalid Food Hygiene rating of 3. He was also ordered to pay costs of £650 and a victim surcharge of £90.</p>

		<p>to display the food hygiene rating of 1 and was in fact displaying an invalid food hygiene rating of 3. The defendant was given the opportunity to discharge his liability for the offence by being offered a fixed penalty notice, but he declined.</p> <p>The defendant failed to attend court for the trial so the case was proved in his absence, with him being found guilty of both offences under the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013.</p>	
10	2.7.21	<p>In February 2020, officers from the Shared Regulatory Services attended a self-storage premises and discovered 9760 packets of counterfeit cigarettes in the defendant's storage unit. The cigarettes also failed to comply with the labelling requirements for cigarettes. The defendant attended court and pleaded guilty to two offences under the Trade Marks Act 1994 and to one offence under the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016.</p> <p>The defendant runs his own shop, but the Probation Officer advised the court that the defendant had indicated that he had been storing the boxes for a friend who had given him £200 and he had not known that he was doing anything illegal. He had subsequently not been able to get hold of the friend.</p>	<p>In sentencing, the Magistrates advised the defendant that these were very serious offences and imprisonment was an option. However, given his previous clean character and his early guilty plea, they issued him with a 12-month Community Order requiring him to carry out 120 hours of unpaid work. They also imposed costs of £375 and a victim surcharge of £95. The seized goods had previously been made the subject of a Forfeiture Order.</p>

11	22.7.21	<p>The defendant had been investigated by SRS after being found to be an unlicensed dog breeder. The charges against him included the unnecessary suffering and mutilation (ear cropping) that he caused or allowed to be caused to the bulldogs he bred.</p> <p>The District Judge was of the view that the defendant had been motivated by greed and money and didn't care about the dogs save for what they could give him in profit. He had consistently given 'no comment' responses at interview and refused to provide SRS investigators with any details of purchasers and sellers. He had been evasive and uncooperative all the way through the investigation and to the probation service. The District Judge took the view that the defendant's comment to the investigating officers that by providing details of individuals involved in the dog world he would be labelled a grass, implies that had been dealing with unsavoury characters. He went on to say that he presents a risk to dogs and that in his opinion this individual doesn't need to be rehabilitated, he just needs to be kept away from animals.</p>	<p>The defendant was sentenced to 16 weeks in custody and a fine of £1,200 fine. He was also ordered to pay costs of £9,775 which must be paid with 14 days of his release. The District Judge disqualified him from keeping animals for a period of 8 years, and also prohibited him from applying for a revocation of the disqualification for 5 years.</p> <p>An order was made to deprive the defendant of the 8 puppies that were seized on the day of the warrant and in addition the 8 adult dogs that were present. These are to be released into the care of the Local Authority within 28 days of his release from custody. A £120 victim surcharge was also imposed.</p>
12	23.7.21	<p>During routine food hygiene visits to a smallholder in February and March 2020, officers from Shared Regulatory Services found live poultry intended for slaughter were housed in filthy conditions; the food processing room, slaughter room and equipment were dirty and covered in blood; foods were not protected from contamination; and animal carcasses and waste</p>	<p>The defendant pleaded guilty to a range of offences under legislation covering both the poor hygiene and misdescription aspects of the case. He was fined £3500, ordered to pay £2000 costs and a victim surcharge of £190. He was prohibited from producing poultry on a commercial basis for five years.</p>

		<p>was not being appropriately stored or disposed of.</p> <p>Immediate intervention was necessary at the business when it was voluntarily closed, and the owner had worked with officers to ensure improvements. However later that same year, in October 2020, standards had lapsed, with poor practices reoccurring. Although a documented Food Safety Management System and cleaning schedules had been put in place, they were not being implemented.</p> <p>When asked, information was not available in relation to the traceability of foods, including where foods came from, and who they were supplied to. Between May and November 2020, chicken was purported to be locally sourced from the defendant's own farm and slaughtered and processed at his on-farm facility when it was not. In October 2020, he sold chicken to a retailer which contained a label that falsely described the poultry as being 'free range' when it was not.</p>	
13	6.8.21	<p>This case arose as a result of the anti-social behaviour caused to neighbours by a resident feeding wild birds. In October 2020, the defendant was served with a Community Protection Notice, requiring her to stop all feeding of birds on the land. However, in March 2021, the defendant was found to be feeding birds again. She was charged with offences under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, and also under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 for failing to comply with the CPN.</p>	<p>The defendant was fined a total of £1000 and was ordered to pay costs of £3,583.38 together with a victim surcharge of £100.</p>