

Report of the Director of West Yorkshire Joint Services to the meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 11th January 2024

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Subject: West Yorkshire Joint Services (WYJS) - Update

Summary statement:

West Yorkshire Joint Services (WYJS) provide a number of services, some of which are statutory, on behalf of the five West Yorkshire Local Authorities Leeds, Bradford, Kirklees, Calderdale and Wakefield. Statutory services included in their activity are Archaeological Advisory Services, Archives, Ecology Services and Trading Standards along with other services such as Archaeological Services, Asbestos and Calibration Services which provide a commercial resource.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

Equality assessments - Please consider and comment on the equality impacts of any new, review, or removal of policies, practices, strategies, services or functions. In some instances this may require the completion of an equality impact assessment form. Full guidance is available on BradNet.

Equality objectives – if the work presented contributes to one of the Council's equality objectives a statement must be provided to explain what and how (more detail available in the report guide).

Andy Robson
Director of WYJS

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Portfolio:

Leader & Corporate

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate

1. SUMMARY

WYJS provide a range of statutory services on behalf of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and the Overview and Strategy Committee were approached to facilitate an update report to the Committee on WYJS service provision in the Bradford District and as a key partner organisation seek to enhance existing working relationships between WYJS and the Council. A similar process is being replicated across the other West Yorkshire authorities with Wakefield, Kirklees and Leeds already having considered a similar update item through their respective scrutiny functions.

A briefing note provided by the WYJS Director which provides details on their activity both in the Bradford District and generally across the region is included in the background section.

2. BACKGROUND

1. This item provides an update on the services provided by West Yorkshire Joint Services in the Bradford District and includes examples of recent activity within the district.
2. Due to the variety of services provided by WYJS they impact on the remits of more than just the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
3. In addition, the Bradford appointed members of the West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee which comprises of representation from all five West Yorkshire authorities play key role in the governance of WYJS.
4. Part 8 of this section includes a detailed briefing note providing information on the services provided by WYJS and case studies of recent activity in the Bradford District.
5. The West Yorkshire Joint Services Vision is to support social and economic prosperity across West Yorkshire and operate as a modern and forward-thinking service. Its mission is to:
 - Encourage a growing economy
 - Support safer, stronger and healthier communities
 - Preserve the past, serve the present and protect the future
 - Promote and conserve the natural and historic environment
6. In addition, WYJS focuses on four main interconnected priorities:
 - Business and the economy
 - Environment and heritage
 - Safer, stronger and healthier communities
 - Operating as a modern and forward-thinking service
7. This item is brought to the Committee to provide an update on the activity of WYJS in the Bradford District and to raise awareness of the important services that are provided by them.
8. This item includes the briefing note from Andy Robson, Director of WYJS to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as follows:

BRIEFING NOTE ON WEST YORKSHIRE JOINT SERVICES

11 JANUARY 2024

Briefing from: Andy Robson, Director, West Yorkshire Joint Services

Briefing to: Bradford Metropolitan District Council Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Role of West Yorkshire Joint Services (WYJS)

West Yorkshire Joint Services deliver a number of high-quality shared services on behalf of the five district Councils within West Yorkshire via a Joint Services Committee arrangement made up of members from each Local Authority. These services either fulfil a statutory role on behalf of the five Councils such as Archaeological Advisory Services, Archives, Ecology Services and Trading Standards or those such as Archaeological Services, Asbestos and Calibration Services provide a first-class commercial resource, delivering vital services to local businesses.

WYJS Vision: To support social and economic prosperity across West Yorkshire and operate as a modern and forward-thinking service.

WYJS Mission: Delivering trusted shared services that:

- encourage a growing economy
- support safer, stronger and healthier communities
- preserve the past, serve the present and protect the future
- promote and conserve the natural and historic environment

WYJS Priorities: WYJS focuses on four main interconnected priorities:

- Business and the economy
- Environment and heritage
- Safer, stronger and healthier communities
- Operating as a modern and forward-thinking service

Archaeology Advisory Service

The Archaeology Advisory Service's principal role is to provide informed and authoritative advice and information to the Planning Authorities in West Yorkshire to help conserve the most significant heritage sites that are affected by development proposals. The Service helps inform and influence sustainable developments within West Yorkshire and promotes an informed understanding and high level of appreciation of those heritage sites.

Archive Service

The Archive Service collects, preserves and makes available for public use over 21,000 individual collections of the region's historic records dating back to the twelfth century. These records are used for research and learning. WYJS also holds one of only five surviving Registry of Deeds in the whole country used for legal purposes or for family and local history.

Ecology Service

The Ecology Service provides informed and authoritative advice and information to the Planning Authorities in West Yorkshire to help conserve the most significant biodiversity habitats and species. The Service holds 501,000 records of individual species (including over 105,000 protected and other notable species) which are mapped on a geographical information system (GIS). The records are accessed or consulted by developers' ecological consultants, nature conservation organisations and the public.

Trading Standards Service

WYJS has several specialist teams within Trading Standards Service covering a wide range of legislation to protect both West Yorkshire businesses and consumers.

The Service uses an intelligence led approach to respond flexibly to emerging threats and demands and ensures issues that cause the highest levels of detriment to consumers and businesses across West Yorkshire are addressed as a priority.

The key activities based on risk and harm, which warrant heightened intervention are:

- Doorstep crime and scams: prevention and detection of rogue trading, scams and frauds, disruption of illegal trading and the recovery of money and assets obtained from criminal activity.
- Safeguarding and maintaining the integrity of the human food supply chain including the safety and legality of animal feed.
- Disrupting the supply chain and availability of illicit tobacco.
- Protecting consumers from purchasing unsafe second-hand cars.
- Product safety: ensuring goods placed on the market are safe and disrupting the sale of age restricted products (for example; alcohol, tobacco and vapes to minors).

Through partnership working this Service also encourages economic growth by proactively engaging with and supporting the West Yorkshire business community (both Primary Authority and non-Primary Authority businesses). Another example of partnership working is the West Yorkshire Financial Exploitation and Abuse Team (WYFEAT) which is hosted and run by this Service. WYFEAT undertakes activities across West Yorkshire to protect vulnerable residents from financial abuse, detecting and investigating incidents of scams, frauds, doorstep crime and family, friends and carer abuse, undertaking effective safeguarding of victims and potential victims, helping residents to be safe, healthy and independent.

Archaeological Services West Yorkshire (ASWYAS)

The Service operates as one of the leading units delivering efficient archaeological and heritage solutions across the UK with an extensive portfolio of sites from housing developments, quarries, road, rail and other infrastructure projects. The Service's approach is focused on delivering customer-focused commercial services, engaging at all stages of development to provide desk-based assessments, heritage statements, geophysical surveys, landscape surveys, watching briefs, trial trenching and excavation services.

Asbestos Services and Calibration Services

Calibration Services protect and support businesses, Local Authorities and other customers by ensuring accurate testing and calibration of weighing and measuring equipment regulated by the Weights and Measure Act 1985. The Service offers UKAS accredited mass calibrations, legal verification of weighing and measuring equipment, and operates two weighbridge test units. The client base includes weighing instrument manufacturers, engineering, pharmaceutical and medical companies, factories and retail users of weighing and measuring equipment.

Asbestos Services provides asbestos testing services to both private businesses, and Local Authorities. This includes asbestos identification and air monitoring which supports compliance and safety for the Service's clients. The asbestos work is also accredited to ISO 17025:2017 standard through the UKAS accredited quality system.

Recent Case Studies

Some examples of the WYJS activity in the Bradford District are highlighted.

Bradford Metropolitan District Council (BMDC)

Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Case studies of WYJS activity in the Bradford District

Archaeological Services West Yorkshire (ASWYAS)

WYAS have undertaken a number of archaeological projects in Silsden in recent years with the most notable site off Keighley Road (works commissioned by Barratt Homes) revealing nationally important evidence for Bronze Age and Iron Age activity. The discoveries include a round barrow, a square barrow and a pit alignment. (Barrows are mounds of soil, stone, and redeposited bedrock heaped over a central burial. 'Pit alignment' is a linear arrangement of pits, typical of the middle and later Bronze Age in southern and central England, originally forming a boundary feature, probably in conjunction with the spoil dug from them raised up as a bank to one side).

Within two pits in the centre of the round barrow, collared urns containing cremated human remains were uncovered. One urn was accompanied by an accessory cup and ceramic beads; the second included three flint knives. These Bronze Age funerary finds are so significant that this site is currently being prepared for publication.

The photograph below shows one of the collared urns in situ.



This photograph shows the aerial view of the site with the square barrow and pit alignment in the foreground.



The Service has also recently completed two geophysical surveys in Silsden, one on land off Hainsworth Road and one close to Bolton Road. The Bolton Road site was also subject to a desk-based assessment on behalf of Persimmon Homes. These site evaluations represent the initial stages in assessing the archaeological importance of a site, prior to development. The work of ASWYAS helps facilitate development in the district whilst preserving, by record, important heritage assets for both the Bradford area and West Yorkshire.

Trading Standards Service

To support the Bradford district business community, the Service provides the Primary Authority scheme to deliver a comprehensive package of advice and support to partner businesses. This is a statutory scheme which is a chargeable service and demonstrates WYJS commitment to form a positive relationship between the business and Local Authority. There are fifteen Primary Authority businesses in the Bradford district, which include the likes of Hallmark Cards, Wm Morrison, Suma Wholefoods and Woolbro Distribution. Partnership working is also established with the West Yorkshire LEP to provide a route to Trading Standards advice for start-up businesses.

The Service operates a Motor Trade Partnership (MTP) as part of its work to protect consumers from purchasing unsafe used cars. Four businesses in the Bradford district are members of the MTP and benefit from guidance on compliance with legislative requirements. Members are audited annually and during the 2022 audit cycle, 3 of the 4 Bradford businesses achieved an award for Excellent Customer Service.

Underage sales enforcement activity is undertaken based on an intelligence led approach. WYJS operates to strict criteria in responding to complaints about the sale of age restricted products to children, particularly alcohol and e-cigarettes, and unsafe consumer goods. Between the period 01/12/22 to 30/11/23 WYJS received 151 complaints from the Bradford District about the sale of age restricted products to children. The majority of the complaints related to alcohol, e-cigarettes and tobacco. Test purchase operations took place throughout the year and a number of underage sales were made by the retailers. Investigations are on-going in respect to these matters.

WYJS has brought four Premises Licence Reviews to the Licensing Committee as a result of visits made to premises holding alcohol licences, where concealed illicit and counterfeit tobacco and e-cigarette products have been found. Alcohol licences were revoked in three of these cases due to the licensing objectives of preventing crime and disorder and preventing harm to children not being upheld. Local media coverage highlighted these decisions, notably the revocation of the licence of Jimmy's Off Licence, Great Horton Road.

On 30 November 2023, Mr Badir Shah, the owner of Phones and Vapes, Bradford appeared at Bradford Magistrates Court to answer charges relating to the sale of an oversized disposable electronic cigarette to a 13-year-old child. Mr Shah pleaded guilty and was fined £400 and ordered to pay a surcharge of £160 and costs of £1028.

This case was launched after WYJS received multiple complaints about the business allegedly selling vapes to children. In April 2023, a 13-year-old volunteer entered the shop, under the supervision of a WYJS Officer, and asked to buy a vape. The volunteer was sold an eLux ENE Lemon Peach Passionfruit 3500 puffs electronic cigarette without asking for any identification, or challenging her age. It is an offence to sell an electronic cigarette containing nicotine to a person under the age of 18 and also an offence to sell a disposable electronic cigarette that has a tank size which exceeds 2 millilitres, or approximately 600 puffs.

During the 2023 firework season officers worked closely with the Bradford MDC Multi-Agency Bonfire group led by the Bradford Community Safety Co-ordinator, to facilitate joint working and integrate the WYJS response to complaints of underage sales of fireworks with the work of other partners, particularly the Police and Community Safety teams. During late October and early November, twelve premises licensed to sell fireworks were visited to monitor compliance. No significant issues were identified and minor non-compliance issues were dealt with at the time by the WYJS Officer.

The Botulinum Toxin and Cosmetic Fillers (Children) Act 2021 makes it an offence to treat, or make arrangements to treat, an individual under the age of 18. Enforcement of this part of the legislation sits with WYJS, (other sections are the responsibility of the Police to enforce). WYJS carried out a trader education project across West Yorkshire to write to all businesses providing botulinum toxin (Botox) and cosmetic filler services that could be identified. A total of 53 Bradford businesses were identified and advised of their obligations. Businesses were asked to sign and return a declaration confirming they had received the advisory letter and that they understood their legal obligations. Any enforcement work arising will be based on an intelligence led approach.

During September 2023, acting on intelligence received from BMDC licensing officers, the WYJS food team conducted a sampling operation in the city centre. Information received concerning a number of city centre public houses all operated by the same individual under a number of limited companies that were allegedly substituting spirits for inferior brands and displaying bar fonts for premium lagers when the barrels in the cellar were a cheaper alternative. The team inspected three establishments simultaneously and took a range of samples which were then submitted to the public analyst for formal examination. Early indications suggest that some of the spirits were in fact adulterated and under strength and investigations are ongoing into the alleged offences.

A recent trend for 'raw feeding' of meat to pet dogs has led to a proliferation of businesses setting up to manufacture this material for pet food. Where feed businesses use products of animal origin in their manufacture, they are subject to an approval process which is policed by the Animal Plant Health Agency (APHA) an executive agency of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Products of animal origin include meat from livestock and poultry. The businesses are also required to register with Trading Standards as feed businesses and are subject to inspection by feed qualified and competent officers.

There are inherent dangers to human health in the handling of raw feed material of animal origin as there is no cooking process involved to act as a 'kill step' for potentially harmful pathogens and the meat is fed to the dog without further preparation.



The approval process requires microbiological sampling by the business to verify the manufacturing process is both hygienic and free from certain pathogens. Achieving approval and registration is costly and complicated. A large proportion of businesses commit their time and investment to get through the approval and registration sign off process and then let standards slip over time. There are a number that actually start operating without the requisite approval and registration and therefore trade illegally.

In February 2023, acting on intelligence received by APHA, a joint visit with WYJS officers was made to premises outside Bradford city centre. During the inspection filthy conditions were witnessed (as shown in the photographs below), the occupier of the premises citing reasons due in part to the rapid expansion of the business. Five feed hygiene improvement notices were served on the business operator requiring action by the operator.



The outcome of this intervention was that improvements were made raising the operating standards and also further investment by the owner into an adjoining unit leading to a revised approval by APHA.

During the course of the year, WYJS, in collaboration with both APHA and BMDC animal health officers have intervened with a further three raw animal feed operators. One of those businesses was trading outside the scope of their registration. They were only permitted to sell feed material from kennel to kennel rather than their practice of also selling to the general public. Notices were served requiring the business to cease the illegal trading. The business now has full approval to continue trading after putting in place the required approved operating conditions.

A further business was found to be trading illegally after a volume of complaints from the public to BMDC regarding the pungent odour of rotting meat resulted in WYJS officers taking appropriate action to stop the illegal activity. The business premises are now occupied by a different company who will shortly begin trading legitimately after being granted the appropriate operating approval.

The third business in question also appears to have been trading illegally based on the complaints received of rotting meat odour emanating from the premises. Upon investigation it appears the illegal business operator has vanished. WYJS officers are currently working with the landlord of the property in order to gain entry to the premises.

In all the above instances, effective collaborative partnership working by WYJS, APHA, and BMDC has resulted in the prevention of unsafe pet food entering the pet food market and reducing the risks to human health from potentially harmful pathogens.

WYFEAT Fraud Prevention Advice & Training

The delivery of an on-going project involving the coordination of WYFEAT training across the West Yorkshire District areas raises awareness of fraud and financial abuse of vulnerable adults and reporting mechanisms. WYFEAT have delivered numerous different training sessions within the Bradford District since the project started. Over the last twelve months, the WYFEAT safeguarding team have reached out to different partners from within Bradford Council, hospital discharge teams and more recently to Elected Members, delivering 11 training sessions, covering topics around financial exploitation and how to recognise the signs, including reporting any concerns to the team. WYFEAT also presented to over 100 attendees at the Adult Exploitation Conference for Professionals in Bradford in November 2022.

WYJS are undertaking initiatives aimed at reducing the impact of doorstep crime across the districts of West Yorkshire. The project referred to as 'Operation Athena' is intelligence and complaint led to help raise awareness of recent Rogue Trader activity within West Yorkshire communities. In line with further PREVENT and safeguarding work, officers from WYFEAT have carried out community engagement visits with residents of 15 different residential areas within the Bradford District since the start of Operation Athena in December 2022. During these visits, officers distribute awareness and information leaflets and speak with residents about recent rogue trader activity. Officers encourage reporting from within the community and give advice on how to prevent becoming a victim to doorstep crime.

WYFEAT Investigations

WYFEAT have been carrying out both investigative and preventative work across the Bradford District. Since April 2023, WYFEAT have received 25 financial exploitation and abuse referrals regarding Bradford residents and in the same period the value of reported fraud/financial exploitation amounted to approximately £170,000. The team are currently undertaking investigations or offering safeguarding support in 17 cases, an example case is detailed below.

Operation Bernese is an investigation into allegations of Fraud by Abuse of Position. The case was referred to WYFEAT recently by Bradford Adult Social Care regarding concerns about the management of a vulnerable adult's finances. The suspect is the victim's daughter and the offences allegedly occurred whilst she was acting as Power of Attorney and managing her mother's financial affairs due to a diagnosis of dementia. The victim lacks capacity to deal with her financial affairs and moved into full time residential care in 2015.

Due to concerns raised, the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) investigated concerns in 2022 and after reviewing the victim's bank accounts, they found seven different transfers made from the victim's account to the alleged suspect's account amounting to £54,500. The victim's account was overdrawn on several occasions meaning that some standing orders for care home fees were not honoured. They also identified some direct debits from the victim's bank account for utility bills however, the victim has not owned a property since 2018 and it is therefore suspected that these may relate to the alleged suspect's property.

The Power of Attorney was revoked by the OPG following their enquiry and WYFEAT are now investigating this matter.

Operation Artemis is an ongoing business engagement initiative that is being run by the WYJS Doorstep Crime & Fair-Trading team. The aim of this operation is to identify businesses at an early stage where consumer complaints have been received that are indicative of breaches of the Consumer Protection legislation. This enables earlier intervention with the businesses in order to bring them into compliance with a view to preventing wider consumer losses going forward.

The threshold for Op Artemis engagement is focused on where there are vulnerable consumers affected or likely to be affected. Raising the profile of WYJS presence amongst local businesses is beneficial both as a deterrent for those looking to cut corners to make financial gain at the expense of vulnerable consumers and also as a mechanism to gather intelligence on any businesses who may cause concern to the Service in the future.

A Bradford based business was recently identified as a suitable candidate for Operation Artemis, after a number of complaints were received in relation to the business not providing refunds to customers amongst other consumer related issues. The activities of this business highlighted concerns to WYJS as some of the affected consumers involved were vulnerable and had suffered a financial loss from paying a deposit for a service that was never received.

After collating the nature of the complaints and identifying issues with the business practices, WYJS officers began engagement with the company Director. After a face-to-face meeting, scrutinising the complaints and identifying the root cause of the problems, the company have agreed to reimburse all the consumers who were waiting for a refund.

This resolution has been greatly received by the consumers who praised the intervention from WYJS and are really happy to finally have their money back. The advice issued to the company will hopefully serve them well and if followed will prevent them from receiving further complaints.

Operation Bale is a large cross regional doorstep crime investigation, which began in June 2022 with a vulnerable, elderly resident who resides in the BD20 area of Bradford. Initial enquiries identified that the vulnerable resident had been repeatedly cold called by an organised group of rogue traders. The victim having paid out over £30,000 for very minimal work on the garage roof at his property. After intense research and intelligence collation, it was identified that the same rogue traders were allegedly offending in three separate Local Authority areas across the North East and West Yorkshire regions. The alleged defendants were using the same offending practices and all the victims they were targeting were elderly and vulnerable. During the investigation it became very clear that the alleged offenders having initially travelled to Bradford to target their victim then continued to return to him to extort money over a period of months.

In March 2023, the alleged defendants involved were assessed and mapped as an Organised Crime Group, believed to be working together to commit doorstep related crime and laundering money through identified bank accounts. The case was then handed over to the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Investigations Team in April 2023 due to the nature of the investigation being cross boundary. WYJS officers continued to support the investigation when required. The Bradford based victim has been safeguarded by WYJS officers to prevent further loss and has been supported throughout whilst the investigation continues.

Operation Brake is a multi- agency operation relating to a double-glazing company based in the Bradford Area. The company have been operating since 2020 and first came to the attention of WYJS in Summer 2022 when complaint received were increasing. An initial advisory meeting was held with the company regarding the complaints and intervention measures were used to try and improve their business compliance. However, despite this intervention, it was clear that the company had no intention of operating as a legitimate company. WYJS continued to monitor them, and their complaint levels continued to increase. The company were found to be targeting vulnerable consumers who lived alone. The company would cold call the vulnerable consumer and make them believe they needed work doing to their property. The company would then send a sales representative to the consumers property who would stay for hours to convince the victim to sign a contract offering different deals and using pressure tactics. The company would then take a 25% deposit which then increased to 50% and would then either ask for more money before completing any of the work or become uncontactable, with the work never completed. The very few consumers who did actually have work done would complain to the company only to be threatened by a manager. The company had in their possession what is referred to as a 'suckers list' which they would use to cold call consumers. It is suspected the offending company have obtained the list of vulnerable consumers from a previous company they all had links to. The offending was well planned and calculated by those individuals who are linked to the company. From the company transactions, it is clear there has been a large amount of money go through their bank account whilst the victims have been left out of pocket by considerable sums. This investigation is ongoing.

The WYJS Proceeds of Crime (POCA) Team are currently assisting Bradford Environmental Health Team with a financial investigation into a couple who are allegedly operating an illegal dog breeding business. They have been allegedly operating illegally since at least 2011 and have never held a licence or incurred the associated costs with running a business of this nature. The couple have also never undergone any fit and proper checks. Investigations by Environmental Health have identified a significant number of dogs registered with the Kennel club and advertised for sale online. They are selling the dogs for around £2,500.00 per time and based on the number of dogs advertised for sale their profit from this illegal business is estimated to be in excess of £900K. It is alleged that the couple have acquired significant assets during the same period. The case is currently listed at Bradford Magistrates for proceedings to commence and the WYJS POCA team are making enquiries to trace assets and confirm the financial gain made from the alleged offending.

WYJS has the responsibility of enforcing legislation in relation to The Tenant Fees Act 2019. This legislation was introduced to prohibit certain types of 'tenant fees' with the aim of making renting fairer and more affordable for tenants. The Service is currently undertaking Operation Titan aimed at improving awareness and compliance within the property rental sector to inform landlords and letting agents of their responsibilities as part of this legislation. WYJS also aims to provide tenants with information about their rights, responsibilities and how to gain redress. As a first step in this project WYJS are identifying Lettings Agents within West Yorkshire in addition to using records provided by the five West Yorkshire Councils' housing teams. The identified Lettings Agents are being contacted and asked to provide key information in relation to their compliance with The Tenant Fees Act 2019. Any identified non-compliances will be recorded on the WYJS intelligence database and dealt with by providing advice or undertaking enforcement action where appropriate. This will help build an intelligence picture of the lettings sector landscape in West Yorkshire and inform future enforcement activity. To date 43 Bradford based agents have been contacted.

The project also aims to strengthen the links between WYJS and the five District Housing Teams to create a stronger intelligence sharing network. WYJS have met with Bradford District housing team and facilitated the team's access to IDB, an intelligence database used by Trading Standards. WYJS officers will be assisting the housing team regarding the use and benefits of the IDB system and how to adopt an intelligence-led approach.

Tobacco

At the start of 2023, WYJS seized its 10 millionth illicit cigarette. In respect to the work undertaken on disrupting the supply chain and availability of illicit tobacco, below are the key outcome headlines for the Bradford district over the last nine years:

- over 3.6 million cigarettes seized
- 618 kg of hand rolling tobacco seized

In addition, the team has also seized more than 13,911 illegal oversize vapes.

In the last twelve months, the team have carried out 68 visits to premises within the Bradford area. The breakdown of those visits are:

- 38 test purchases undertaken with 80% of those resulting in sales of illegal products.
- 30 inspection visits which resulted in the seizures of both illegal tobacco and vapes.

The breakdown of the illegal products seized during the last twelve months are:

- 29,279 x 20 packets of cigarettes seized.
- 1,564 x 50g pouches of hand rolling tobacco seized.
- 5,261 oversized disposable vapes seized.

The work of the team has also resulted in seizures of counterfeit clothing, non-duty paid alcohol and nitrous oxide.

WYJS officers undertake partnership working to contribute to the Tackling Illegal Tobacco for Better Health programme. Officers deliver education sessions to community groups, schools, colleges and front-line professionals. To date, during 2023, 15 presentations have been delivered in the Bradford District to an audience of 1595 members of the public and 137 professionals including schools, community faith groups, youth groups, public health, police, housing and youth workers. A further 10 pop-up community events have been delivered in Bradford at libraries, wellbeing events and health professional events.

West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service

In addition to providing advice and information to the Bradford District Planning Authority in respect to planning applications, the team have also been working on a number of strategic projects which include:

- The River Worth/River Aire Keighley flood alleviation. The Service was involved in the design and monitoring of a geoarchaeological survey to look at the history and formation of the Worth and Aire Valleys and to establish if there is a potential for early prehistoric remains to be present.
- Castle Road, Ilkley. WYJS officers are dealing with public concerns and organising an excavation north of the Roman Fort as part of Yorkshire Water's new sewage scheme for the town.
- Apperley Bridge in respect to the River Aire flood alleviation scheme. The Service has been undertaking monitoring work and archaeological recording on the Tudor and later stone bridge during strengthening work.

Other project work involves monitoring the condition of Low Mill Keighley which is listed grade II structure. This was probably the first textile mill in West Yorkshire to use a steam engine but has been in a poor condition for many years. At the time of writing an excavation exploring Low Mill's mill pond off Gresley Road is imminent.

The photograph below shows Low Mill in its current condition.



The Service has also been advising on the extent of historic building recording required at Keighley Railway Station before a proposed upgrade. Officers also reviewed proposals for a new train depot at Shipley, provided advice to BMDC regarding the impact of a ground source heat pump and other changes to the grounds of a Tudor hunting lodge at Myddleton Lodge, Ilkley and issued advice to the White Rose Forest regarding tree planting sites in the district.

Portable Antiquities Scheme

The WYJS Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) held 4 'Finds Surgeries' within the Bradford District in the last twelve months. These surgeries are opportunities for finders of archaeological objects to bring them in for examination and identification, and if they meet the criteria, the finds are recorded onto the Portable Antiquities Scheme database in order to better understand and preserve our shared heritage.

The Finds Liaison Officer is supported by a team of volunteers to help identify, photograph and record archaeological finds submitted to the Service. In the last twelve months, 450 finds submitted at the 'find surgeries' have been processed and recorded. These finds cover the Mesolithic, Roman, Medieval and Post Medieval periods.

FLOs have a statutory role in the administration of the 1996 Treasure Act. The officers advise finders on their legal responsibilities and as an expert witness, they write curatorial reports for the coroner. A silver ingot found in Bradford and reported to WYJS was declared Treasure at an inquest in May 2023 and Bradford Museum Service are hoping to acquire it.

In the last twelve months, four new cases of potential Treasure have been reported to WYJS by Bradford residents including a rare early Bronze Age lunula (neck ornament) which was found in North Yorkshire (as shown in the photograph below). It is made of very thin sheet gold and has traces of incised decoration still present. It is one of only five recorded on the PAS database of 1.6 million objects and is one of the most complete examples. The FLOs report on the find has been submitted and the inquest is expected to be held next year.



Archive Service

The mission of the WYJS Archive Team for the Bradford District is to preserve and make accessible the unique documentary heritage of the region and help members of the public to use and enjoy these records. During 2022-23, the Bradford Archive team produced over 3,000 historical documents from the archive stores and engaged with over 2,500 people, answering their enquiries, responding to Freedom of Information requests and promoting the district's rich heritage resources to a global audience. WYJS supports BMDC to manage their corporate memory by ensuring that its records are preserved and managed appropriately in accordance with recognised standards and relevant legislation. The Archives team continues to facilitate access to the records held by the Service not only to the public but colleagues in BMDC. These include representatives from Legal, Architectural, Planning and Parks departments.

The Archive team are engaging with partner organisations and BMDC to ensure that the archives of the Year of Culture, Bradford 2025 are preserved for future generations. There will be a hugely significant digital archive and these records will enable residents to reflect on the long-term impact and success of the Year of Culture and will capture a pivotal point in the District's history.

The Bradford Archive team have been working with Bradford Theatres as part of their most recent heritage project, 'Heritage Centre Stage.' The project aims to bring the heritage of Bradford's landmark theatres, St George's Hall and the Alhambra, to a wider range of people. As part of the project the Bradford team collected a substantial new deposit of records for the theatres which includes some amazing photographs, scrapbooks, and programmes. This deposit complements and brings up to date existing holdings for Bradford theatres and allows greater public awareness of, and access to, the unique theatrical history of the area. In addition, as part of the project, a student volunteer has been box listing the huge number of programmes received with the deposit which will help make the collection accessible sooner.

In September 2023, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Bradford City Hall the Bradford Archive office created an online exhibition exploring the foundations of City Hall through the archives held by the Service. Particular focus was made on the competition to design the building which was launched in May 1869 and architects around the country were invited to submit entries. The competition was eventually won by local architects, Lockwood and Mawson.

Recently, the Archives team worked with Bradford Libraries team to transfer the records of North Bierley Board of Guardians from Keighley Library into the WYJS Archive. The collection falls outside of Keighley's area and covers much of the wider district not covered by the Bradford Board of Guardians records already held by the Service. Board of Guardian's records cover the period from the 1830s to the 1930s and are a particularly important research resource for social history as the records document the lives of individuals who may not be represented in other sources.

The Bradford team are currently working with Maya Productions on 'Routes to Roots,' a South Asian arts project working with communities across Croydon, Sheffield and Bradford to explore their stories through workshops, culminating in performances developed from the stories. The Bradford element is due to be delivered in 2025. As the project will be collecting stories from participants, Maya Productions has recruited an archivist to facilitate the deposit of material in local archive services. WYAS have been supporting the recruitment of a qualified archivist, as well as advising Maya Productions on the information they will need to collect alongside records to ensure they are properly documented when deposited with WYAS. Most importantly, additional records from Bradford's South Asian community will be a welcome addition to the archive service and their work to reflect the communities WYJS serves.

At the beginning of the year Bradford Family History Society (BFHS) were awarded a grant from Bradford Council to build a new online transcription database. Some of the records they will be using are from collections held by the Service, including the Bradford Board of Guardians records. Their bid included funding for an induction session with the Archive Service, to help contextualise the records and the processes they will need to follow. By working with BFHS on the grant, records are brought to a larger audience via a local 'champion,' which will in turn signpost researchers to other local records and organisations.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

It is hoped that this item will enhance existing relationships between Bradford Metropolitan District Council and WYJS, raise awareness of the services they provide and highlight the positive work done in the District.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

There are no specific financial and resource implications associated with this report. Any implications would be raised via the WYJS Joint Services Committee.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

There are no specific risk management and governance issues associated with this report. Any issues would be raised via the WYJS Joint Services Committee.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

There are no specific legal issues associated with this report. Any issues would be raised via the WYJS Joint Services Committee.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.2 TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

- Refer to the guidance contained in: 'Deciding Rights - Applying the Human Rights Act to Good Practice in Local Authority Decision-Making' published by the Local Government Association (<https://www.local.gov.uk>).
- Consult the lawyer who normally offers advice in relation to the matters covered in the report.

7.5 TRADE UNION

None.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE LOCALITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

None.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

Undertake a Privacy Impact Assessment to determine whether you need to deal with data protection and information security matters arising from the proposal/decision.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

- a) Members note the content of the report and consider any future scrutiny actions that could arise from this item; and
- b) Note the breadth of work undertaken by WYJS in the Bradford District and raise any questions related to these services in the district.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) Members note the content of the report and appendix and consider any future scrutiny actions that could arise from this item; and
- b) Note the breadth of work undertaken by WYJS in the Bradford District and raise any questions related to these services in the district.

11. APPENDICES

None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None