

### BEST VALUE REVIEW OF COMMERCIAL ENFORCEMENT

#### 1 Introduction

This report is the outcome of the Best Value Review of:

- Environmental Health Commercial (Food Safety and Health and Safety)
- Trading Standards
- Licensing including Taxi Licensing

This improvement plan intends:

- Identify Outcomes
- Set key tasks
- Allocate responsibilities
- Set “stretching” targets and performance measures and indicators
- Specify a timetable
- Identify the financial and environmental impacts of the actions
- Ensure the implications of the Hampton Review as it progresses should be taken into account

#### 2 Preferred Option

The preferred option as recommended by the Environment Scrutiny Committee and endorsed by Strategic Monitoring Committee is to:

##### **Re-engineer the current services to deliver more efficient services**

The service can, through a combination of measures improve its overall efficiency. The use of the Council’s SIPs process and the introduction of a contact centre may enable the current relationship between the “Back Office” and the “Front Office” to be re-engineered. By re-engineering these services greater capacity should be created to deliver services to the public and businesses alike. Greater capacity also allows the service to target more resources on meeting the Council’s Corporate Objectives as well as meeting the requirements of the various Regulatory Agencies.

Whilst this approach does provide scope for greater capacity it will not deliver enough capacity for any of the services to deliver comprehensive enforcement services across the full range of regulatory services. This would mean the Council needs to be quite specific, not only about what it will do with this extra resource, but also what it will not be able to do. Therefore Service Plans will need to be explicit about which work is high priority and which work is lower priority. The Service Plans will need to be explicit about the risks associated with such prioritisation and how such prioritisation fits with the Council’s Corporate Objectives and the requirements of Regulatory Agencies.

#### 3 Identified Outcomes

To achieve these efficiencies the Services will need to undertake the following tasks:

- Create a Contact Centre to handle incoming service requests.

- Re-engineer the current “Front Office” and “Back Office” functions to maximise the principle of dealing with service requests in one transaction and by minimizing referrals to the “Back Office”.
- To maximise the service’s capacity to provide “on-line” forms and advice for businesses.
- Facilitate through the use of IT – flexible working for staff.
- Create a Divisional recruitment plan to ensure professional staff can be recruited and retained by the Division.
- A Gap Analysis on areas where Risk Assessment has not been undertaken.
- Undertake a review of possible joint working arrangements with neighbouring authorities.
- Review the current working practices to maximise the potential for joint working between the three teams.
- Review the funding made available through the fee income from Liquor Licensing to expand the service and to help deliver an out of hours service (this would be cross Division service, including Environmental Protection).
- Ensure that there is integration of the Regional Consumer Direct Service into the Trading Standards Service and the Council’s SIPs programme

In addition the Council will need to take into account the provisions of the Bill announced in the Queens Speech to implement the recommendations of the Hampton review.

Central Government, through the Treasury, are driving the recommendations of the Hampton Review at a rapid pace. This is evidenced by an announcement in the Queen’s Speech that a Bill would be introduced later this year to establish a Central Trading Standards Agency. This new Agency will see some restructuring of trading Standards Services as a consequence.

It is clear that the implementation of the Hampton Review will continue apace over the next few years and the improvement plan will need to take account of the changes being introduced to regulatory Services. The Government, through the Cabinet Office have indicated that the Local Authority Better Regulation Unit (LABREG) is now up already developing radical proposals to implement a new approach at a local level. LABREG is committed to consultation on these issues and is looking to develop the best possible policies for local enforcement consistent with the Hampton principles. Initially LABREG is focussing on:

- Developing a clear set of priorities for local regulatory services
- Codifying and generalising best practice (including best practice in the area of compliance incentives for business)
- Risk-based enforcement
- Developing a better performance management system for local regulators

Clearly many of these issues overlap or have a direct impact on the recommendations in the improvement plan.

#### **4 Peer Assessment of Trading Standards**

Also included in this improvement plan are the actions identified following a Peer Assessment of Trading Standards.

**COMMERCIAL ENFORCEMENT – IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Officer(s)</b>	<b>Start / Finish</b>	<b>Financial / Environmental Implications</b>	<b>Indicator for Improvement</b>
	Improved capacity Improved customer satisfaction	Create a Info by Phone Centre to handle incoming service requests.	EHTS Staff moved to "Info by Phone"  Submit to IEG	Head of Service	April 2006  By 15 Sept 05	Cost neutral - long term savings / none	Customer satisfaction Cost of service
	Improved capacity Improved customer satisfaction	Re-engineer the current "Front Office" and "Back Office" functions to maximise the principle of dealing with service requests in one transaction and by minimizing referrals to the "Back Office".	Redesign processes in line with CRM (across all activities within EHTS)	MP / PN / SL / MH / RPK / Waste manager	Commence 1/9/05 complete April 2006	Cost neutral - long term savings / none	Customer satisfaction Cost of service
	Improved responsiveness	To maximise the service's capacity to provide "on-line" forms and advice for businesses.	In line with CRM (across all activities within EHTS)	MP / PN / SL / MH / RPK / Waste manager	Commence 1/9/05 complete September 2006	Spend to save	Customer satisfaction Responsiveness
	Improved capacity Improved customer satisfaction Improved responsiveness	Facilitate through the use of IT – flexible working for staff.	Identify potential participants lead by Division moving to Plough Lane	MP / PN / SL / MH / RPK / Waste manager	Commence 1/9/05 complete April 2006	Reduced accommodation needs / reduction in travel	Customer satisfaction Cost of service Responsiveness

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	Start / Finish	Financial / Environmental Implications	Indicator for Improvement
			Implement flexible working policy (across all activities within EHTS)			Reduced accommodation needs / reduction in travel	Customer satisfaction Cost of service Responsiveness
	Improved capacity Reduction in staff turnover	To create a Divisional recruitment plan to ensure professional staff can be recruited and retained by the Division.	Implement market forces / supplement. Succession planning Utilise SRDs / implement career development posts and conclude job evaluation Promote professional development support through training agreements and payment of professional fees. Develop secondment opportunities internally and with partners. Establish more structured approach towards training of staff in "difficult to recruit" posts such as	MP / PN / SL / MH / RPK / Waste manager	Ongoing – produce document by 30/12/05	Cost saving	Staff turnover

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	Start / Finish	Financial / Environmental Implications	Indicator for Improvement
			TSOs and EHOs Promote pride in Herefordshire.				
	Improved performance	A Gap Analysis be undertaken on areas where Risk Assessment has not been undertaken. This work needs to be dovetailed with the outcome of the Local Authority Better Regulation Unit (LABREG) response to the Hampton Review. Work is being undertaken to establish national priorities for the various national agencies who control these regulatory services	Undertake analysis prior to reassessment of National Priorities being established through LABREG	Divisional Management Team	Finish internal analysis by April 2006 Remaining work will need to meet the national timetable.	At this stage this is difficult to determine – the Government have indicated that some authorities do not spend enough money on regulatory services and consequently perform poorly. Benchmarking data is poor and is probably strongest for Trading Standards	Establishment of revised BV166 (part of LABREG work plan)
	Improved capacity	Undertake a review of possible joint working arrangements with neighbouring authorities.	Undertake Analysis of areas where Joint Working may be possible	Divisional Management Team	September 2006	Cost Savings	Cost of Service
	Improved capacity	Review the current working practices to maximise the potential for joint working between the three teams.	Compare / collate back office processes	MP / SL / PN	After the re-engineering takes place	Efficiency Savings	Cost of services Customer satisfaction

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	Start / Finish	Financial / Environmental Implications	Indicator for Improvement
							Staff Opinion Survey Satisfaction
	Improved performance	Review the funding made available through the fee income from Liquor Licensing to expand the service and to help deliver an out of hours service (this would be cross Division service, including Environmental Protection).	Service restructure following the implementation and transitional phase of the Licensing Act 2003	SL/RK/AET	April 2006	Efficiency Saving	Customer satisfaction
	Improved capacity	To ensure that there is integration of the Regional Consumer Direct Service into the Trading Standards Service and the Council's SIPs programme	Start up of the Regional Consumer Direct Call Centre (being established in Coventry)	MPP	April 2006	Efficiency Saving	Percentage of Herefordshire Consumer Advice Calls dealt with by Consumer Direct
	Improved performance	The Council will need to review the provisions of the Bill announced in the Queens Speech to implement the recommendations of the Hampton review.	Produce a summary of effects	AET	Finish 30/04/06	To be determined	To be determined

### Peer Assessment Improvement Plan for Trading Standards

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	Start / Finish	Indicator for Improvement
H	Engagement with Head of Service, Director and elected Member in the development of the Service	Regular updates and briefings to Director and Member with HOS and other Service Managers		Trading Standards Manager / Head of Service	From May 2005 – in progress	
		Cabinet reports to be submitted where appropriate				
		Secure Members/directors attendance at TSI Conference/Year Ahead Symposium				
		Member to visit office/work shadow				
		Attendance by H.O.S at TS Service Meetings.				
H	Review of Leadership to understand how effective it is	Trading Standards Manager to undertake Corporate Management Competencies programme including 360° assessment		Trading Standards Manager	Sept 2005 - 2007	Percentage of SRDs completed within timeframe
		Undertake Management Development Programme				
H	Engage with a wider range of stakeholders when formulating Policy and Strategy. Balance the needs of different stakeholders when developing policies and strategies	Undertake a stakeholder analysis and review, including using Herefordshire Partnership, Local Area Forums/Citizens Panel for consultation and setting priorities	Effective Involvement through regular consultation and formulation of Policy and Strategy	Trading Standards Manager/QM	In line with Business Planning Process 06/07 September / October 2005	

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	Start / Finish	Indicator for Improvement
H	Communicate relevant policies, strategies and plans to local consumers, consumer representatives and stakeholders	Publish on dedicated TS Website				Customer/Business Satisfaction Survey LAF's /Customer Panel
H	Policy and Strategy is not reviewed and assessed for effectiveness	6 monthly review meeting with PTSO's		TS Management Team	September 2005 6-Monthly	
M	Involve and encourage staff in the development of service policies, strategies and plans	Annual Staff away day to develop Service Plan		Trading Standards Manager	In line with Business Planning Process October 2005	Staff Opinion Survey and Herefordshire Driver results
H	Establishment of formal/informal strategic Partnerships	Engage with key stakeholders		Trading Standards Manager/Hos	Ongoing	
H	Ensure that data reporting for TSS activities is accurate, appropriate and aligns with NPF requirements	Engage with Software provider	In progress	Trading Standards Manager / Lc&Ta	May 2005 to March 2006	
M	Understand the marginal costs of Service provision as a means to help service	Activity based cost analysis undertaken	Activity based costing implemented and used to	Finance Officer / Finance Section	In line with Service Planning Process	



Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	Start / Finish	Indicator for Improvement
	planning and prioritisation		measure efficiency and drive performance Information provided to appropriate Officers		06/07 OCT 2005	
M	Evaluate new technological developments that might impact upon Service delivery	Investigate flexible working practices and new technology	Use of ICT to assist Service delivery improvement	Trading Standards Manager / Ptso's Service Area /	Ongoing	
L	Make services more accessible, especially to present non-users	Identify and survey non-users. Use of questionnaire/Info Shops		Trading Standards Manager/QM	March 2006	
M	Set clear standards for Service provision based on consultation	Consult stakeholders Use of LAF's/Customer Business Satisfaction Surveys		Management Team / Research Team	October 2006	Results of customer satisfaction survey
H	Ensure that Customer and Business Satisfaction Survey questionnaires align with NPF reporting format	Align questionnaires	In progress	Trading Standards Manager / QM	Nov 2005	Results of customer satisfaction survey

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	Start / Finish	Indicator for Improvement
H	Recording, review & analysis of complaints / compliments / comments regarding Service	Implementation of dedicated Corporate CRM system for recording and analysis of Comments, Complaints & Compliments		I T Section	October 2005	Results of customer satisfaction survey
M	Staff feedback of actions / outcomes derived from Herefordshire Driver and Staff Opinion Survey.	Standard team meeting agenda item./ Team Away Day		Trading Standards Manager / Head of Service	April 2006	Staff perception measured by Herefordshire Driver & SOS
L	Talks, exhibitions and seminars undertaken by the Service to be evaluated and assessed for effectiveness / improvement	Pro-forma to be produced		All Staff	Ongoing	
		Use of pro-forma by all staff undertaking such activity	Analysis of pro-formas	Trading Standards Manager / Management Team		
		Data used to inform / improve Service delivery				
H	Key performance data to be aligned with requirements of the NPF & Peer Review Model	Trends to be monitored		Trading Standards Manager / Eh & Ts Management Team	March 2006	.
		Key data to be benchmarked				
		Targets to be established				
		Reviewed by EH & TS Management Team monthly				