

Cabinet

Minutes of meeting held on 2 June 2010

The Cabinet met at County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester on 2 June 2010.

Present:

Angus Campbell (Chairman)

Hilary Cox (Vice-Chairman)

Toni Coombs, Peter Finney, Spencer Flower and Robert Gould

John Wilson, Chairman of the County Council, attended under Standing Order 54(1).

Officers: David Jenkins (Chief Executive), Miles Butler (Director for Environment), Elaine Taylor (Director for Corporate Resources), Debbie Ward (Director for Adult and Community Services), Paul Kent (Chief Financial Officer), John England (Head of Learning and School Improvement for Director for Children's Services), Kirsty Riglar (Democratic Services Manager) and Jonathan Slater (Senior Public Relations Officer).

For certain items as appropriate: Deb Appleby (Head of Policy and Performance), Dave Ayre (Head of Countryside and Business Development), Ken Buchan (Coastal Policy Manager) and Sara Moseley (Efficiency and Change Officer - Pathfinder).

(Publication Date: 8 June 2010)

(Note: (1) In accordance with Rule 16(b) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules the decisions set out in these minutes will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of five working days after the publication date.

(2) **RECOMMENDED** in this type denotes that the approval of the County Council is required.)

Apology for Absence

293. An apology for absence was received from John Nash (Director for Children's Services).

Code of Conduct

294. No declarations were made of personal or prejudicial interests.

Minutes

295. The minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2010 were confirmed and signed.

Forward Plan of Key Decisions

296.1 The Cabinet considered the draft Forward Plan of Key Decisions covering the period 1 July to 31 October 2010, which was due to be published on 16 June.

296.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services noted the need for the final decision on the Purbeck Review of School Provision to be included within the Forward Plan when it was published.

Resolved

297. That the draft Forward Plan of Key Decisions be approved as amended.

Attendance at Local Government Association Annual Conference

298. The Cabinet noted that the County Council's four appointed representatives to the Local Government Association's General Assembly would be attending the Annual Conference which would be held in Bournemouth on 6 - 8 July 2010 and considered whether bookings should be made for further members.

Resolved

299. That, in view of the cost of the delegate fees for both the full conference and individual days, bookings should not be made for further members.

Key Decisions included in the Forward Plan**Corporate Plan 2010-14 – First Year Action Plan**

300.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive regarding the first year action plan for the Corporate Plan 2010-14. An earlier draft of this was considered by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 24 May 2010 and this was accepted, with the recognition that work was still to be done to complete a number of gaps and ensure that the data provided was set in the context of the County Council's own targets or those set nationally. The final version now contained 123 actions.

300.2 Approval of the action plan for 2010-11 was necessary to enable the Corporate Plan to be published in its entirety. Further work to extend the plan to cover 2011-14 would start later in the summer to take account of the revision of the Community Strategy and the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Audit and Scrutiny Committee had asked that all members be invited to make suggestions for the development of the three year plan when they were sent copies of the current year's plan.

300.3 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services requested that two amendments be made:-

- (i) action 8 – the phrase "trust partners" be replaced by "The Children's Trust"; and
- (ii) actions 18 – 20 – to be conflated into two actions with the words "to develop aspirations and resilience" included within one of the two actions.

300.4 The Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources drew attention to the statement in the budget/risk assessment in relation to the County Council's current balanced budget for 2010-11 and drew attention to the possibility that any reduction in the budget implemented by the new Government would affect this status and would, consequently, have an effect on the ability to achieve the actions set out in the action plan.

300.5 In response to a member's question, the Chief Financial Officer confirmed that the County Council now operated a five point scale for its risk registers.

Resolved

301. That the Corporate Plan action plan for 2010-11 be approved, subject to the amendments set out in minute 300.3.

Reason for decision

302. To ensure that the Corporate Plan provides a robust statement of the County Council's aims and priorities for 2010 onwards and that it supports the authority in making the best use of available resources.

External Funding Monitoring Report

303.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive providing an analysis of external funding activity across the County Council for the financial year ending 31 March 2010. Overall, 51 bids were submitted seeking £29M in grants. To date, 25 bids had been successful in securing £25M to deliver a wide range of activity. Particular attention was drawn to the £3.4M from the Future Jobs Fund, £3M from 'myplace' and nearly £14M for the Olympic Transport Package.

303.2 Members noted that £25M was less than the amount secured during the previous year but greatly welcomed the achievements in securing external funding and gave every encouragement to officers to continue this work.

303.3 In response to a member's question, the Chief Executive confirmed that allocations from the Special Projects Fund were made within the context of the County Council's policy framework to support the aims and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan. However, occasionally opportunities arose when a small amount of match funding or the funding of feasibility reports from this Fund would enable significant amount of grant to be secured for projects in Dorset.

Resolved

304.1 That the report be welcomed.

304.2 That the priorities for 2010/11 set out in the report be supported.

Reason for decisions

305. Monitoring of how effective the County Council is in this key area of activity supports the Corporate Aim 'develop public services fit for the future'.

Wyke Regis Infant and Junior Schools

306.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director for Children's Services regarding the future of the Wyke Regis Infant and Junior Schools. Following the retirement of the headteacher of the Infant School in July 2009, a series of meetings with representatives of the two schools had taken place to consider an amalgamation. This resulted in a decision to publicly consult upon a preferred option for a new Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school to replace the two existing schools.

306.2 This public consultation took place between September and November 2009 with responses showing overall support for the proposals. However, whilst continuing to wish to work together more closely, the headteachers and chairs of the governing bodies of both schools raised significant concerns about an amalgamation, predominantly in relation to equal treatment for staff at both schools and finance.

306.3 It was therefore proposed that the schools should work together as a federation; remaining separate schools with separate budgets but with a single governing body. Both governing bodies had recently considered this proposal and agreed that a period of consultation should go ahead and this was currently underway. Once the responses were considered by the two governing bodies, it

would be their decision whether to implement the federation. Should the decision be made to go ahead, the federation would come into effect on 1 September 2010.

Resolved

307.1 That the outcome of the current proposal to federate Wyke Regis Infant and Junior Schools be reported to the meeting of the Cabinet in September 2010.

307.2 That officers continue to support the two schools in ensuring a smooth transition should the federation go ahead.

Reason for decisions

308. The realisation of this opportunity to enhance educational provision for the Wyke Regis area will contribute to the County Council's Corporate Aim 'improve life chances, health and independence for people within thriving and safe communities'.

Dorset Public Sector Network Procurement Project

309.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive regarding the Dorset Public Sector Network Procurement Project. This would provide co-ordinated requirements in the information gathering, tender and procurement phases to procure a framework contract to supply network infrastructure and associated services for organisations delivering public services in the South West. In the first instance, the contract would need to meet the business needs of, and be accessible to, public sector organisations within Dorset. It was also intended that this would be made accessible to the voluntary and private sectors within the County. Mapping of the current arrangements and the opportunities for engagement across all sectors was currently underway.

309.2 Attention was drawn to the Procurement Strategy and the 'Competitive Dialogue' procedure that would be used to discuss all aspects of the proposed contract with potential suppliers. Evaluation criteria would be used to differentiate between providers. To date, 43 expressions of interest had been received from suppliers.

309.3 Members noted that there were a number of strands to the provision of better network infrastructure in Dorset and the aspiration to link the procurement of a new public sector network with that of next generation access and also to the 2012 Games Legacy project.

309.4 The Cabinet were reminded that a bid for £200,000 to support this project had been made to the South West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP). However, decisions on such bids were currently on hold until the Government's plans for in-year saving – and the consequent effects on the RIEP – were known.

309.5 Members expressed their wholehearted support for the project, recognising the importance of the establishment of an efficient network infrastructure and greater broadband connectivity across Dorset.

Resolved

310.1 That the project remains viable and is in line with the strategic direction of the participating organisations.

310.2 That the approach to procurement be noted and further detail be received throughout the process.

310.3 That the project timelines be noted.

Reason for decisions

311. To ensure members are sufficiently aware of the progress of this project which will contribute to the County Council's Corporate Aim 'develop public services fit for the future'.

Consultation on the principles and content of the orders establishing Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Districts and their associated Authorities

312.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director for Environment regarding a consultation by Defra on the principles and content of the orders establishing Inshore Fisheries and Conservation districts and their associated Authorities. This focussed on a generic formula to establish a recognised and agreed methodology for calculating the proportion of local authority's levies for the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) established by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

312.2 Members were informed that for the existing Sea Fishery Committees there was no consistent method of calculating each local authority's proportion of levy to their local Committee. In order to clarify the situation for the new IFCAs, a generic formula was therefore proposed by Defra. The proposed calculation stated that the County Council should contribute 27.85% of the total costs of the Southern IFCA. This represented an increase of 7.85% and equated to an additional contribution of £35,713 resulting in a total levy of £126,703 based on current costs. However, with additional responsibilities expected of the IFCAs, these costs were likely to increase further.

312.3 The Director also highlighted the similar effect that the proposed formula would have on Hampshire County Council and the fact that despite an expectation that the two authorities would contribute almost two-thirds of the cost of the IFCA, they would each only be entitled to appoint one representative to it.

312.4 The Cabinet expressed their concern about the proposals, particularly the likely financial burden that they would place upon the County Council, and agreed that there was a need to make a clear, strong and sharp response to Defra on these points.

Resolved

313.1 That the content of the consultation and the implications for the County Council be noted.

313.2 That the main points set out in the Director's report form the basis of the County Council's response to the consultation.

313.3 That the Director for Environment, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, be authorised to agree the final wording of the response.

Reasons for decisions

314.1 There are potentially significant financial implications for the County Council relating to the levy to be paid to the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA). It is important to ensure that the contribution is proportionate and equitable with other contributing authorities and that the County Council are sufficiently and proportionately represented on the IFCA, based on the financial contribution being made.

314.2 This approach will support the County Council's Corporate Aim 'develop public services fit for the future'.

Recommendations from the Community Overview Committee

315. The Cabinet considered recommendations from the meeting of the Community Overview Committee held on 30 April 2010, which included Key Decisions set out in the Forward Plan:-

Recommendation 60 - Customer Services in Dorset - Vision and Strategy Refreshed for 2010-2013

Resolved

316. That the final draft of the Customer Service Strategy 2010-2013, including the action plan, be approved.

Reason for decision

317. To ensure delivery of the County Council's Corporate Aim 'develop public services fit for the future'

Recommendation 64 - Place Survey 2010

318. In response to a member's question, the Director for Corporate Resources reported that confirmation had been sought from the Department for Communities and Local Government as to the arrangements for the Place Survey 2010 in the light of the change of government. To date, no definite response had been received and, in the light of the close deadlines, it was therefore advisable to assume that it would need to be carried out in 2010.

Resolved

319. That the draft response on the Place Survey 2010 to the Department of Communities and Local Government to be sent on behalf of Dorset local authorities be approved but in the light of an invitation to influence the new government's approach to reduced burdens for local government, this be raised as an example.

Reason for decision

320. The Place Survey is a statutory consultation which helps gather attitudinal data for both service development and performance monitoring, including the collation of a number of National Indicators.

Recommendation 69 - The Changing Landscape of Post-16 Learning and the Financial, Curriculum and Organisational Implications for Dorset Adult Learning

Resolved

321.1 That acceptance of the invitation to take on the role of Lead Accountable Body for Informal Adult Learning and adopt Option 3 in paragraph 6.2 of the Director's report be approved.

321.2 That the retention of Local Authority responsibility for learner and employer responsive provision (qualification courses) by adopting Option 2 in paragraph 6.3 of the Director's report be approved.

321.3 That a subsidy of £704 per 19-24 year old Apprentice and £634 for each Apprentice aged 25+ be provided to retain Apprenticeship funding at current levels.

321.4 That Dorset Adult Learning's (DAL) response to funding challenges and leadership opportunities be approved.

321.5 That the refresh of the DAL Development Plan in Appendix 5 contained in the background information relating to this report (the Cabinet approved the original 3 year plan on 1 April 2009), in order to enable the SFA contract to be signed in due course, be noted.

321.6 That Ronald Coatsworth be appointed as the County Council's representative on the Dorset Adult Learning Academic Board to the next County Council elections in 2013.

321.7 That the Budget Review Group be requested to examine the predicted deficit on the DAL budget and consider options on how this should be addressed.

Reason for decisions

322. To secure the future sustainability of the County Council's Adult Learning Service (DAL). DAL contributes to the following of the County Council's Corporate Aims:-

- 'improve life chances, health and independence for people with thriving and safe communities';
- 'improve Dorset's transport and economy';
- 'safeguard Dorset's unique environment'; and
- 'develop public services fit for the future'.

Recommendation 73 - Community Trading Services Service Delivery Plan 2010/11

Resolved

323. That the Community Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan for 2010/11 be approved.

Reason for decision

324. The Plan sets out how the Service will address its statutory duties, local demands, central government department priorities, and how the work of the Service supports the County Council's aims. It also demonstrates how the Service will address the national indicator set, used to assess corporate performance. The Trading Standards Service supports the Council's aim to improve life chances, health and independence for people within thriving and safe communities.

Recommendation 74 – Trading Standards Service Food Service Plan 2010/11

RECOMMENDED

325.1 That the Trading Standards Service Food Service Plan for 2010/11 (set out in the Annexure to these minutes) be approved.

325.2 That the following Public Analysts be appointed for food purposes:-

Mr S Dyeriss J Green	Hampshire Scientific Services (Hampshire County Council, Regulatory Services), Hyde Park Road, Southsea
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Mr D Arthur Mr R Ennion Mr J P Wootten	Eurofins Laboratories Ltd, 318 Worpole Road, London
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Mr C Heide Dr A Smith	Somerset Scientific Services (Somerset County Council, Consumer Protection Department), County Hall, Taunton
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Reasons for recommendations

326.1 To accord with the Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement (Framework Agreement) requirement that the Food Service Plans for Food Enforcement agencies are produced and approved by the County Council.

326.2 The plan contributes to the corporate aims to improve life chances, health and independence for people within thriving and safe communities

through work to help ensure people are safe and healthy from their food consumption; and to improve Dorset's transport and economy through advice to assist businesses in distributing compliant products and trading fairly and safely.

326.3 The County Council has a responsibility for appointing Public Analysts for food examination and analysis and also for the appointment of the Agricultural Analyst. These appointments are required by statute as part of formal food and animal feed sampling requirements placed on local authorities.

Recommendation 79 – Trading Standards Service Age Restricted Sales

Resolved

327. That the proposed enforcement programme for 2010/11 be incorporated into the Community Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan work plans.

Reasons for decision

328.1 It is important that the County Council has a planned programme of enforcement activity for dealing with the illegal sale of age restricted products so as to protect young people and their communities from the adverse and possible addictive effects of these products.

328.2 This area of responsibility contributes directly to the County Council's Aims and Priorities in respect of "People and Community". In particular it supports the aim to improve life chances, health and independence for people within thriving and safe communities. It also supports the shared responsibilities contained in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) with regard to 'Safer and Stronger Communities' and 'Healthier Communities'.

Recommendation 85 - Great Dorset Steam Fair - Provision of Temporary Traveller Site

329.1 The Chairman, as the County Council member for Hambledon and, as such, the local member for the Great Dorset Steam Fair site highlighted the issues relating to the provision of a temporary traveller site and the circumstances that had resulted in the revision to the officer's recommendations to the Community Overview Committee at their meeting on 30 April. He reiterated how contentious this issue was locally and welcomed the establishment of a policy development panel to review the options available for future years.

329.2 Members' attention was drawn to the receipt of e-mails from Martin Oliver, Managing Director, Great Dorset Steam Fair Ltd and Brian Wizard from Tarrant Monkton and Launceston Parish Council and a written representation from Paul Speakman, Chairman of the Parish Council's Travellers Site Committee, which were circulated at the meeting.

329.3 The Cabinet welcomed Mr Oliver's confirmation of the use of the current site and the 50% voluntary contribution toward the cost for 2010. It was recognised that the provision of a definite position statement from Dorset Police would aid the policy development panel in its work.

Resolved

330.1 That the criteria for the comparison of locations for temporary Steam Fair Traveller sites be agreed.

330.2 That the Tarrant Hinton site be confirmed as the only site matching those criteria, it be used for 2010/11 Steam Fair events, and a review of the options available to the County Council and its partners beyond 2011 be

carried out by a policy development panel of the Community Overview Committee.

330.3 That the appointments to the policy development panel of Ronald Coatsworth, Michael Bevan and Nigel Reed, with the Liberal Democrat Group members to be confirmed by the Group Leader, be noted.

330.4 That representatives of North Dorset District Council be invited to attend meetings of the panel.

Reasons for decisions

331.1 To ensure the general well-being of the people of Blandford and a wide area surrounding the Steam Fair site through the enablement of police powers to deal with unauthorised camping.

331.2 To end the uncertainty of finding a location for the temporary site each year.

Recommendation 89 - Policy Development Panel on the Independent Safeguarding Authority

332. Whilst it was recognised that the Policy Development Panel and the Community Overview Committee had both considered the background and context to the approach set out in recommendation 89, the Cabinet agreed that in order to make an informed decision on such an important subject, a decision should be deferred to enable a report setting out the detail to be considered at their next meeting.

Resolved

333. That a decision on recommendation 89 from the Community Overview Committee be deferred to the meeting of the Cabinet on 30 June 2010.

Reason for decision

334. To enable the Cabinet to receive further information relating to the context within which the Committee made their recommendations.

Other Business

Local Authority Business Growth Incentive

335.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director for Environment regarding proposals for the use of the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) funds allocated to the County Council, amounting to £186,615 for 2010/11. This represented part of a sub-regional allocation of £650,270 for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole, distributed between the local authorities.

335.2 Members were reminded that in previous years the LABGI funding had been used to enhance the capacity to deliver on the County Council's priority objectives of improving Dorset's infrastructure and strengthening its economy, to combat the impact of the economic recession and implement the participatory budgeting pilot scheme. It was proposed that the 2010/11 funds be used to secure two crucial posts within the Environment Directorate for a further period of four years, fund the development and delivery of the green knowledge economy concept within the Multi Area Agreement (MAA) and help address any continuing effects of the recession.

335.3 The Cabinet welcomed the proposals for linking the use of the LABGI funds to the delivery of the MAA and reiterated their support for the creation of a joint economic development unit and would welcome inclusion of the six Borough and

District Councils. However, concerns were raised about the longevity of the LABGI funding stream.

335.4 The Chief Executive drew attention to a statement in the Coalition Government's programme for government which set out their support for the creation of "Local Enterprise Partnerships". It was envisaged that these would be joint local authority – business bodies brought forward by local authorities themselves to promote local economic development to replace the Regional Development Agencies. However, it was stated that these might take the form of existing RDAs in area where they were popular.

335.5 Members recognised that this was unlikely to be the case in the South West and that there was more of an appetite for the devolution of the RDA's economic development functions to a sub-regional level. It was possible that the MAA Board was best placed to take on this role for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole.

Resolved

336. That Local Authority Business Growth Incentive funds for 2010/11 be used to:-

- (i) secure the continuation of the Economic Development Officer and Strategic Transport Planner posts to 31 August 2015;
- (ii) further the development of the green knowledge economy concept and the Multi Area Agreement including costs associated with co-locating the strategic economic development team at Bournemouth University; and
- (iii) help address any continuing effect of the recession.

Reason for decision

337. This use of the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive funding will contribute to the achievement of the County Council's Corporate Aim 'improve Dorset's transport and economy'.

Section 31 Grant – Weymouth Transport Package for the 2012 Games

338. The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking agreement to the terms and conditions of the offer of a Section 31 Grant from the Department for Transport of £0.679M for 2009/10 and £3.690M for 2010/11 for the Weymouth Transport Package for the 2012 Games.

Resolved

339. That the grant offer be accepted subject to the terms and conditions set out in Annex B of the letters from the Department for Transport.

Reason for decision

340. In order to receive the grant funding, the County Council needs to formally accept the terms and conditions of the grant.

Funding Allocations for Local Area Agreement 2008-11

341.1 That Cabinet noted that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda following the decision of the Dorset Strategic Partnership Board to revisit its recommendations for the allocation of Performance Reward Grant funding.

341.2 However it was noted that a small number of bids for funding were time critical and that decisions may need to be taken as a matter of urgency and it was proposed that the Chief Executive should be asked to accept delegated authority to do this.

Resolved

342. That the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the County Council, be authorised to agree to the allocation of Performance Reward Grant where a decision is required urgently.

Reason for decision

343. To allow for any decisions to be taken on the allocation of funding that are deemed to be urgent.

Recommendations from Roads and Rights of Way Committee

344. The Cabinet considered recommendations from the meeting of the Roads and Rights of Way Committee held on 11 May 2010.

Recommendation 51 - Proposed Parking Restrictions on the B3159, Steepleton Water, Winterbourne Steepleton**Resolved**

345. That the Order for proposed parking restrictions on the B3159, Steepleton Water, Winterbourne Steepleton be made as advertised.

Reasons for decision

346. To regulate parking on the B3159 near its junction with the A35 trunk road with due regard to safety and turnover of parking space for short stay visitors to the nearby school and garage whilst maintaining reasonable passage for vehicles. This will contribute to the corporate aim to improve life chances, health and independence for people within thriving and safe communities.

Recommendation 54 - Pedestrian Crossing Programme 2010/11**Resolved**

347.1 That progress with the programme for 2009/10 schemes shown in Appendix A be noted and that this, together with the top priority rated scheme shown in Appendix B (item 1), be the 2010/2011 pedestrian crossing programme.

347.2 That those outstanding requests (item 2) for pedestrian crossings, and any subsequent requests that meet the agreed criteria, be re-ordered in their priority ranking for consideration in future financial years.

347.3 That requests that do not meet the minimum threshold for justifying a pedestrian crossing (Appendix B of the report, items 3-13) be deleted from the list and referred back to the Town, Parish or Borough Council with reasons for the decision.

347.4 That, if following advertising, a proposed pedestrian crossing is unopposed or, if any objections are withdrawn, it be installed without further reference to the Roads and Rights of Way Committee.

347.5 That when existing pedestrian crossings require modernisation or refurbishment the Assessment Criteria be applied to determine whether each crossing is upgraded to an improved form, converted to a less costly pedestrian crossing, relocated or, if no longer required, removed and the justification duly noted and reported to members.

Reason for decision

348. To contribute to the County Council's Corporate Aims 'improve life chances, health and independence for people within thriving and safe communities' and 'improve Dorset's transport and economy'.

Recommendation 57 - Proposed 50mph Speed Limit Order – C12, Cosmore**Resolved**

349. That the Order for a 50mph speed limit for Cosmore be made as advertised.

Reason for decision

350. To avoid danger to persons or other traffic using roads and preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising. For facilitating the passage on the road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians) or of vehicles, thereby linking to the corporate aim of strengthening local communities and improving road safety. The proposal will minimise the use of fuel and pollution.

Questions

351. No questions were asked by members under Standing Order 20(2).

Exempt Business**Exclusion of the Public****Resolved**

352. That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the item of business specified in minutes 353 to 355 because it was likely that if members of the public were present there would be a disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs stated below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing that information.

Dorset Development Partnership

353.1 The Cabinet considered a report by the Director for Environment regarding an invitation to express an interest in the establishment of a joint venture Limited Liability Partnership with a private sector partner, BV Strategies Facilitating Limited.

353.2 Members were informed that this proposal had been considered by the Asset Management Group who had expressed their support for the three month investigation period.

353.3 The Cabinet agreed that the establishment of such a Partnership and the potential benefits to the County Council's approach to asset management should be investigated. It was recognised that in order to approve the establishment of the Partnership, the Cabinet would need to be convinced that this approach would produce benefits to the people of Dorset that the County Council could not produce on its own and it was agreed that a more detailed presentation would be provided at an informal session.

Resolved

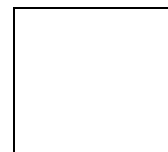
354. That officers investigate the establishment of a joint venture Limited Liability Partnership and accept the offer from BV Strategies Facilitating Limited to review potential projects over the next three months and report back to the Cabinet at a future meeting.

Reason for decision

355. This initiative has the potential to contribute to the County Council's Corporate Aims 'improve Dorset's transport and economy' and 'develop public services fit for the future'.

Annexure

Community Overview Committee/ Cabinet



Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	Community Overview Committee - 30 April 2010 Cabinet – 2 June 2010
Officer	Acting Director for Adult and Community Services
Subject of Report	Trading Standards Service - Food Service Plan 2010-2011
Executive Summary	<p>This report outlines the main provisions of the proposed Trading Standards Service, Food Service Plan for 2010-2011 and in particular highlights the intentions for service delivery. A draft of the plan is included in the background information to this report. An extract from the plan summarising service delivery proposals is attached as an appendix.</p> <p>The proposals for enforcement and advice work by the Trading Standards Service include the areas of complaint response, business advice requests; food hazard alerts, proactive sampling activity, visits to businesses and general promotion and awareness raising on relevant food issues.</p> <p><u>Key delivery activities</u></p> <p>In particular members' attention is drawn to the following key service delivery activities in the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food businesses will continue to have access to legal guidance on compliance with standards through the Trading Standards Business Advice Line; improved website pages and targeted e-mail contact groups to update businesses on key areas of law. Advisory work is a high priority area and is the usual approach used to secure compliance.• Enforcement and advisory visits will be made to all high risk food suppliers, based on the universally applied risk

	<p>assessment scheme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Food Alerts' from the Food Standards Agency will be responded to. When major alerts that have the potential to affect Dorset are issued, the Trading Standards Service will seek to coordinate the activities of other partner local authorities across the county. • Healthy eating initiatives including funded work with partners, such as NHS dieticians and district council environmental health services, to encourage catering businesses to provide healthy food options, and continuing engagement with local bakers to achieve reduced salt use. • Through liaison and joint working across the County Council and other local agencies food labelling (including 'traffic light' labelling) and composition issues will be highlighted so that food standards work can be used to impact on health issues, such as childhood obesity, where possible. • Raising awareness and understanding of food labelling amongst the public to allow informed healthy eating choices to be made, with particular regard to nutritional information and salt intake. • Continued contribution to relevant regionally and nationally coordinated food standards sampling projects in order to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of proactive food sampling. Use of a national database (The Food Surveillance System) will continue to be developed to support an efficient approach to sampling. • A regional intelligence hub will be used to inform others and monitor food fraud and relevant rogue traders. <p><u>Investigative projects</u></p> <p>Particular areas for investigative projects using enforcement techniques of inspection visits, sampling and analysis are planned and these include issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sale of food beyond use-by date • Claims by catering establishments (organic/local origin) • Substitution, adulteration and counterfeit alcoholic spirits • Imported food from non-EU sources, especially recognising problems with melamine contamination • Veterinary medicine residues in meat • The risk based programme of visits to assess hygiene at premises of primary food production (i.e. livestock and arable farms) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding stuffs sampling at all feed producers/mills together
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	<p>with a programme of sampling at farms.</p> <p>The proposed Public Analyst re-appointments for 2010-2011 are also included and detailed at paragraph 3.1.4 of the appendix to this report, with one addition to the analysts at Hampshire Scientific Services. The preferred approach is that three food analyst businesses are appointed giving scope for choice and obtaining best value. Only one Agricultural Analyst and a Deputy are recommended as that is the requirement of the Agriculture Act 1970.</p>
Impact Assessments:	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment: A number of areas have been highlighted which will be addressed in the coming year. These include exploring whether there are gaps in the provision of advice to non-English speaking businesses. In addition there is a need to provide awareness training to staff on diversity, and adult and children's safeguarding issues.</p>
	<p>Use of Evidence: Intelligence data held by the Service, including details of complaints, requests from businesses and non-compliances identified through enforcement activity, the Office of Fair Trading/LACORS National Control Strategy for Trading Standards and the Regional SWERCOTS Strategic Assessment plan have been used to draw up this plan and the work plans in line with the National Intelligence Model (NIM).</p>
	<p>Budget/ Risk Assessment: This report does not represent any additional spending outside the separately agreed budgets for service delivery by the Trading Standards Service.</p> <p>The key risk implications involve failure to carry out statutory duties imposed on the local authority such as failure to respond adequately to serious food safety alerts and risks arising from incorrect legal advice to businesses and consumers.</p>
Recommendations	<p>That the Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) considers and comments on the Trading Standards Service Food Service Plan for 2010-2011, (ii) recommends to the Cabinet that the County Council approves the Trading Standards Service Food Service Plan for 2010-2011, and (iii) recommends to the Cabinet that the County Council confirms the appointment of the Food and Agricultural Analysts detailed at Section 3.1.4 of the Food Service Plan for 2010-2011.
Reason for Recommendation	<p>To accord with the Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement (Framework Agreement) requirement that the Food Service Plans for Food Enforcement agencies are produced and approved by the County Council.</p> <p>The plan contributes to the corporate aims to improve life chances, health and independence for people within thriving and safe communities through work to help ensure people are safe and healthy from their food consumption; and to improve Dorset's transport and economy through advice to assist businesses in</p>

	<p>distributing compliant products and trading fairly and safely.</p> <p>The County Council has a responsibility for appointing Public Analysts for food examination and analysis and also for the appointment of the Agricultural Analyst. These appointments are required by statute as part of formal food and animal feed sampling requirements placed on local authorities.</p>
Appendix	Extracts from the Draft Food Service Plan 2010/2011.
Background Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Background Information provided by the Acting Director for Adult and Community Services including the Draft Food Service Plan 2010-2011. - Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement (July 2004). - Community Trading Standards Service Plan 2010-2011.
Report Originator and Contact	<p>Bill Jaggs, Head of Regulatory Services</p> <p>tel: 01305 224923</p> <p>email: b.jagxx@xxxxxxxx.xxx.xx</p> <p>or</p> <p>Ivan Hancock, Divisional Trading Standards Manager</p> <p>Tel: 01305 224956</p> <p>Email: i.n.hancock@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>

Appendix: Key Extracts from the Draft Trading Standards Food Service Plan 2010-11

PUBLIC ANALYSTS

- 3.1.4 The County Council has responsibility for appointing Public Analysts for food examination and analysis and also for the appointment of the Agricultural Analyst. The following Public Analysts are appointed for Food purposes, with the only addition being Miss J Green, an additional analyst at Hampshire Scientific Services :

Mr S Dyer Miss J Green	Hampshire Scientific Services (Hampshire County Council, Regulatory Services), Hyde Park Road, Southsea
Mr D Arthur Mr R Ennion Mr J P Wootten	Eurofins Laboratories Ltd, 318 Worple Road, London
Mr C Heide Dr A Smith	Somerset Scientific Services (Somerset County Council, Consumer Protection Department), County Hall, Taunton

The County Council has appointed Mr D Arthur as Agricultural Analyst and Mr R Ennion and Mr J P Wootten as Deputy Agricultural Analysts, all from Eurofins, for the purposes of the Agriculture Act 1970.

SERVICE DELIVERY

- 4.1 Trading standards services in relation to food standards are delivered through a mix of trader advice; consumer complaint investigation; sampling and premises inspection and other monitoring. Whenever possible food standards services are delivered alongside other trading standards service responsibilities such as weights and measures, unfair trading, and product safety for example, with a single comprehensive visit being used where visits are required. The Service recognises the advisory aspect of all visits to businesses and will continue to treat visits as an opportunity to support local businesses with legal advice, as well as checking for compliance.
- 4.2 The Service continues to focus on high risk inspection visits as a priority with some medium risk businesses being visited through targeted projects to address particular areas of non-compliance. Complaints may also trigger enforcement visits.
- 4.3 Service Delivery Points**
- 4.3.1 The first point of telephone or email contact for consumer complaints from Dorset residents, is the Consumer Direct service, available on the nationally promoted number 08454 04 05 06. Protocols are in place to ensure that food complaints are passed, if appropriate straight away, to the Service for response. The Service has in place 24-hr emergency call-out arrangements, answer phone on all publicly advertised telephone lines, voice messaging on officer direct dial telephone numbers and the dorsetforyou.com Internet site provides information on all areas of activity.

4.3.2 Businesses can access the Service via the dedicated Business Advice Line (01305 224702).

4.3.3 Consumers, businesses and others requiring a response on any Trading Standards matter can also access the service by:

- general enquiries telephone number 01305 (or 01202) 224012
- generic email tradingstaxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx.xx
- writing to us at Colliton Annexe, Colliton Park, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Full details of accessibility and service standards are set out in an appendix to the CTSSP.

4.4 Areas of Focus for Service Delivery

4.4.1 This year the following priority areas have been identified through the business planning process, which takes account of the current demands of stakeholders be that businesses, consumers, government or response to trends for example. This year's priorities are:

- **Business Advice**
The provision of advice to businesses on request to help ensure compliance is a vital strand of enforcement work. A dedicated Business Advice Line (01305 224702) is provided though a rota of trained officers and visits are also made to business requiring help in interpretation of the law.
- **Home Authority Companies**
Encouraging a collaborative approach with key locally based businesses trading beyond Dorset boundaries, to ensure legislative compliance while reducing the burden on business from other trading standards services and other agencies. A positive response will be made to any requests made to establish new Primary Authority agreements as promoted by the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO), although to date no interest has been expressed.
- **High Risk Food Suppliers**
Those businesses identified as high risk using nationally accepted risk assessment.
- **Food Fraud**
This is an area of work of national priority recognised through the continued work of the Food Standards Agency's Food Fraud Team. Regional and local intelligence will also help shape our work in this area as will inspections that will be project and complaint driven. Opportunities will be sought to link to national and regional projects. Current areas of concern include food adulteration, substitution, counterfeiting and local claims.
- **Using Intelligence and response to national alerts**
The Service will contribute to intelligence locally, regionally and nationally through the new extended Trading Standards intelligence database. We will continually monitor for any emerging issues that may affect Dorset business and consumers that may necessitate a response and refocus to our priorities. Where national food alerts are received for action the Service will liaise with District Council colleagues to ensure uniformity and non duplication of enforcement. Where food alerts are received for information food officers will be advised of action required as appropriate.

- **Allergens**
Ensure compliance with allergen declarations on pre-packed foods and raise awareness amongst caterers, including take-away outlets, of the dangers of undeclared allergens in meals. The emphasis here is now on Dorset home authority companies.
- **Healthy Eating**
The Service will continue its work on healthy eating through its strategic partnership work in supporting The Healthy Weight Strategy for Dorset. Through The Healthy Weight Action Plan the Service will work with partners such as District Council Environmental Health and NHS Dieticians to encourage caterers to provide healthy food options. Funding has been secured through Dorset NHS PCT to support this work which will be piloted in the Weymouth & Portland and East Dorset District Council areas. A national toolkit to support trading standards services engagement with local bakers to reduce salt in bread will be used to support and extend the work already underway to encourage local bakers to meet industry voluntary salt reduction targets. Consumer advice and education will also form an important part of work in this area.
- **Sale of food beyond use-by date**
Previous project work has illustrated that problems of this nature are ongoing and improvements will continue to be sought where companies' own checking systems have not prevented 'out of date' from being offered for sale.
- **Imported Food From Third Countries**
Supplies of food imported from outside the Economic Union, are worthy of scrutiny, with the example of melamine in food being an issue in the last year. This will be addressed by means of participation in a South West regional partnership project.
- **Claims at Catering Establishments**
Claims of products offered being local to Dorset, and those relating to food being organically produced will be examined through visit and sampling checks.
- **Medicine Residues in Meat**
Sampling will explore residues of veterinary medicines present in meat, against permitted maximum levels.
- **Animal Feed Mills**
To ensure locally based producers of animal feed have quality systems in place and legal compliance is achieved. This includes the analysis of samples taken against the composition claims made.
- **Hygiene at Premises of Primary Food Production**
A risk based programme of visits assessing hygiene at premises of primary food production (i.e. livestock and arable farms).
- **Spirit Substitution**
An available enforcement toolkit will be employed to check if Dorset shares problems found nationally with substitutions of cheap alternatives, adulteration or counterfeit product, some of which has been identified as unsafe elsewhere.

- 4.4.2 These priority areas will include the key traditional measurable activities of inspections, sampling, complaints and service request. A breakdown of these activities is helpful to those, such as the FSA and peer authorities, who audit enforcement work. These ingredients also feature in the returns on enforcement activity to the FSA and subsequently the EU. This also assists analysis of trends.
- 4.4.3 These priorities will be addressed through small projects or sampling exercises and a brief project plan will be drawn up in advance and reported to the Trading Standards Management Team. These outline the target premises, whether samples are formal or informal with other methodology, resources needed and timescale. Results will be reported in the same way and progress monitored as part of the overall regular performance management process.
- 4.4.4 With all projects and sampling exercises officers will be aiming to ensure that appropriate attention is given to mobile premises and other market stall type outlets, and also to Internet sales.

4.5 Food and Feeding Stuffs – Premises Inspections

- 4.5.1 Premises Profile: The premises database holds details of approximately 3600 food and 2200 animal feeding stuffs premises. These premises are risk assessed in accordance with LACORS Risk Assessment Scheme. LACORS guidance suggests high risk premises are comprehensively inspected annually, medium risk every 2 years and low risk every 5 years. This guidance has not been able to be met due to previous reductions in resources and now also reflect a change in approach to one of 'no visit without reason'. This reflects the changing national emphasis away from routine inspection visits. However, other more targeted project based visits will be employed in an effort to ensure unfair trading practices are identified and challenged.

	RISK			TOTAL
	High	Medium	Low	
Food	122	1333	2165	3620
Animal Feeding Stuffs	4	272	1939	2215

- 4.5.2 Programmed Inspections: The service will undertake comprehensive inspections of all high risk premises. The relevant targets are:
- Food high risk comprehensive inspections 122
 - Animal feed high risk comprehensive inspections 4
- 4.5.3 Comprehensive premises inspections to medium and low risk food and animal feed suppliers will only take place as required through a targeted and project based programme. This shift away from routine comprehensive inspection is a product of Dorset's budgetary constraints and from taking account of 'better regulation principles', leading to greater emphasis on business advice and a targeted enforcement activity approach. The Service will continue to respond to any national guidance from the Local Better Regulation Office.
- 4.5.4 It is estimated that revisits will be made to 15 per cent of premises inspected. To undertake this programme of inspections, revisits and targeted project based food visits an estimated minimum of 223 officer days (1.25 fte) is required.

4.6 Food and Feeding Stuff Complaints

- 4.6.1 All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Dorset County Council Trading Standards Service Quality Assurance Manual (SDP1 Dealing with Complaints and Enquiries; SDP 11.3 Dealing with Food Complaints).
- 4.6.2 In 2009-10 the Service handled 47 food complaints, with just 4 animal feed complaints. Resources applied to such complaints would therefore only be in the region of £1500 for sample analysis or examination and an estimated 0.5 FTE. It is possible that complaints may result from attention being given to health and nutritional claims becoming increasingly focused on by consumers.

4.7 Home Authority Principle and new Primary Authority arrangements

- 4.7.1 **Proactive:** The authority recognises the importance of supporting Dorset based businesses who market their products and/or services outside of the county and therefore fully supports the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) Home Authority Principle. To achieve this we will ensure all 17 food businesses for which we act as Home Authority (as listed on the LACORS website) will receive one full visit during this year. An estimated 10 officer days is required to meet this demand.
- 4.7.2 **Reactive:** Advice, Home Authority referrals and complaints concerning these businesses will be dealt with in accordance with the Trading Standards Service Quality Assurance Manual. Based on previous years, it is estimated that the Service will receive 95 contacts relating to Home Authority businesses from other authorities, requiring around 34 officer days to meet this demand. As has been experienced in 2009/10, extensive and often urgent demands over short periods can be required in reacting to recalls or other high risk food standards issues.
- 4.7.3 The Service remains keen to respond to any needs arising from the development of the 'Primary Authority' principle which has been promoted by the Local Better Regulation Office since April 2009, with very little take-up nationally. No businesses have expressed an interest in changing the current 'Home Authority' arrangements, which in Dorset are widely appreciated.

4.8 Advice to Business

- 4.8.1 The Service provides a business advice service, which includes a freepost address and "local call" telephone line. The Service deals annually with around 2000 requests for advice from businesses, although only approximately 3 per cent of these are in relation to Food Safety Act matters and just a handful on animal feeding stuffs. In particular, emphasis is given to assisting businesses in ensuring that new products comply with legislation and proactively informing businesses of changes in the law that will affect them. Delivery is in accordance with the Trading Standards Service Quality Assurance Manual (SDP 6.1 Procedure for Advice to Businesses). For food standards issues the advice given during and after a visit is a significant way in which business advice is delivered.
- 4.8.2 Email groups have been set up to distribute key information to business. Support is also given to the Direct from Dorset Scheme and visits are made to, and advice given to, members. Officers will also respond to specific demands for talks to particular food producing based groups, such as has been provided for small local honey producers previously.

- 4.8.3 A minimum of 0.75 officer posts (full time equivalents) is required to deal with business advice on food standards issues.
- 4.8.4 The 'Buy With Confidence' trade approval scheme may attract applicants from food businesses and any such applications will lead to an initial audit and checks on the business concerned before they are given authority to display the logo to better promote themselves to consumers. While food businesses are not the key target for this scheme, it may hold appeal to local producers. Any applications will be treated as a priority but it is difficult to predict workload in this area, in relation to food standards.

4.9 Food and Animal Feeding Stuffs Sampling

- 4.9.1 The aim of sampling food and feeds is to provide a means of checking a small proportion of the final products that are presented to Dorset consumers, and for that final check to ensure foods and feeds are of the quality and description demanded, and that they are adequately labelled. Analysis of samples ensures that businesses are putting advice and guidance into practice.
- 4.9.2 The policy of the authority in relation to food and feed samples is that samples are taken:
- to ensure the compliance and safety of Dorset produced products (this will include ingredients and finished foods),
 - to address concerns raised by complaints from members of the public, including businesses,
 - to support national, regional, and local projects and trade audits,
 - to respond to concerns from alerts or intelligence on potential or actual problems found elsewhere,
 - to reflect the level of risk from lack of legal compliance, or
 - generally to support priority areas identified in this plan.
- 4.9.3 This year financial commitment to spending specifically on food and feeding stuffs sampling and analysis will be £18,000. It may be possible to retrieve some funding via any FSA co-ordinated national sampling.
- 4.9.4 Food and feeding stuffs sampling form part of home authority contact, high risk inspections and other project and responsive work. Activities which will include sampling are summarised in Appendix two.
- 4.9.5 Identification and registration of animal feed premises is required. Emphasis will be on those arable farms that grow crops for animal feed. The sampling programme will focus on deleterious substances, vitamin levels and compliance with the statutory statement.
- 4.9.6 The following resources have been set aside for these exercises (incorporating a total of around 150 samples):
- A sampling budget of £18,000 (£11,500 food; £6,500 feed)
 - Staff resources of an estimated 30 days.
- 4.9.7 To ensure best use is made of limited sampling resources an in-house Screening Test Laboratory is operated by the Service. This can provide a limited range of informal tests. To ensure the validity of screen tests conducted, a random selection

from the samples tested are sent as control samples to the Public Analyst in accordance with Quality Assurance Procedure (SDP7 Screen Testing: In-House Laboratory).

- 4.9.8 Continued use will be made of the developing UK Food Surveillance System, a national database to assist with the co-ordination of sampling, and allowing for better targeting of food samples. Improvements are being made to the way this links to the Service's main FLARE database.

4.10 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

- 4.10.1 All information received will be passed to the appropriate District Council Environmental Health service in accordance with Dorset County Council Trading Standards Service Quality Assurance Manual Procedure SDP1 – Procedure for dealing with complaints and enquiries and SDP 11.2 Detention/Seizure of food. Based on previous experience the resource requirement is negligible.

4.11 Food Safety Incidents

- 4.11.1 Food Alerts from the Food Standards Agency will be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Practice. Where a major alert 'For Action' arises the Trading Standards Service will seek to coordinate the activities of other partner Local Authorities across Dorset and will apply resources from other areas of the Service as required.

4.12 Liaison with Other Organisations

- 4.12.1 The Service has liaison arrangements in place to ensure consistency and co-ordination of enforcement activity. The South West of England Regional Co-ordination of Trading Standards group (SWERCOTS) brings together authorities from across the region at a strategic level (Strategy and Policy Group) and has included specialist liaison through a virtual (email) Sectoral Interests Group. Food standards issues are fed into the regional 'Healthier Communities Commissioning Group'. Inter-authority auditing is carried across the region, promoted by SWERCOTS member authorities. Further liaison takes place between Heads of Services from this Service and District Environmental Health services, and meetings of the specialist food officers from Dorset food authorities (Appendix 1). This facilitates sharing of best practice and common problems and challenges. Where particular food fraud problems came to light it may be possible to draw on the skills and resources of the regional Scambusters Team.
- 4.12.2 Valuable links to District Council Environmental Health services are maintained, with regular meetings of food practitioners to share best practice and intelligence on problem areas.
- 4.12.3 Through liaison and joint working across the County Council and other local agencies, and through links established in the Dorset Strategic Partnership, food labelling and composition issues will be highlighted in order that food standards work can be used to impact on health issues, such as childhood obesity, where possible.
- 4.12.4 The Service has a formal framework agreement with DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and works to has memorandums of understanding with Dorset Police on information sharing and Proceeds of Crime Act work. Some jointly funded work is being currently carried out with the NHS Primary Care Trust. There are other less formal links and operational contact with other public services such as the Food Standards Agency, HMRC, Dorset Fire and Rescue

Service, Environment Agency, the Health and Safety Executive, British Cattle Movement Service, and the National Farmers Union.

4.13 Food and Feeding Stuff Safety and Standards Promotion

4.13.1 Each year a number of activities aimed at promoting awareness of the Service and raising the level of knowledge about trading standards issues by businesses and consumers in Dorset are undertaken. The Service recognises that by raising awareness and understanding of food labelling amongst the public it can facilitate informed healthy eating choices to be made.

4.13.2 Details of these initiatives are set out in the CTSSDP. Food standards work and key messages for consumers and businesses are imparted through the following mechanisms:

- press releases and media contacts to respond to issues and alerts that arise
- appropriate contribution and support to local food publication “Gut Reaction”, produced by Dorset food authorities
- use of the ‘Food Vision’ website to promote initiatives such as the ‘bag for life’ with nutritional labelling information
- highlighting work through the South West Public Health Observatory
- County Council’s newspaper ‘Your Dorset’ delivered to all households in Dorset
- articles in other appropriate publications
- guidance notes and checklists will be identified, stocked and made available and where appropriate produced by this Service to assist businesses in complying with legal requirements
- the Dorset website portal, www.dorsetforyou.com, including the Trading Standards Institute’s TS Broadcast package with updated advisory leaflets
- talks to key consumer and business groups organisations, including food input where appropriate
- response to requests for talks to local groups or students, with static displays where appropriate
- use of an interactive IT package (‘talkingshop’) for young people/ schools, for which a food module is available
- use of a mobile display trailer tour at appropriate events, highlighting trading standards enforcement and advice issues

4.13.3 Throughout the year these opportunities will be used to highlight aspects of food work where the service can make a more positive contribution to the wider health issues, and in particular those relevant at a local level.

Draft Food Service Plan

DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2010-2011

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1. Introduction
2. Service Aims and Objectives
3. Background
4. Service Delivery
5. Resources
6. Review

Appendix 1 : Dorset Food Authorities

Appendix 2 : Food Service Plan Targets 2010-11

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Food safety is one of a number of enforcement responsibilities that the Trading Standards Service has. Therefore, this Plan and actions from it are incorporated into the overall Community Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan 2010-11 (CTSSDP) and headline issues are reflected in the Regulatory Services Cost Centre Plan and the Adult and Community Services Directorate Plan.
- 1.2 The purpose of this plan is to detail how the Trading Standards Service will apply its resources in the area of food standards for the year 2010-11. The document has been drawn up following the overall service planning process of assessing local needs, reviewing consultation and other key drivers and staff and management review.
- 1.3 A separate Food Service Plan allows a clear outline of this key aspect of the service. It assists elected members, consumers, businesses, staff, other enforcement bodies and external auditors in being able to focus on the food standards elements of the Trading Standards role in Dorset. The plan is also written to meet the specific elements of the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) guidance on service plans.
- 1.4 Food Standards enforcement and advice work provided by the Trading Standards Service needs to be seen in the broader context of a hierarchy of aims and objectives which are expanded on in section 2 below. These are:
 - The Strategic Aims set out in 'Our Role in Dorset',
 - Directorate wide and Regulatory Cost Centre aims and objectives,

- Trading Standards Service Mission, and
- Trading Standards Service Objectives.

1.5 Profile of the Local Authority

- 1.5.1 The population of Dorset is approximately 400,000. Apart from the urban ring around the separate unitary Boroughs of Bournemouth and Poole, it is a very rural county. The population is growing and at present Dorset has the highest population of retired people in the country, with a low proportion of children.
- 1.5.2 The World Heritage Status of Dorset's coast and the widespread designation of areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty could greatly influence tourism and the number of visitors to the County, which already has a strong tourist industry, and which is higher than the national average. The farming and agricultural industries are a vitally important part of the local economy.

2 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The Trading Standards Service mission is:

"to provide a fair and safe trading environment for the consumers and businesses of Dorset, through education, advice, enforcement, and by working together with our partners."

- 2.2 Working within the framework of more generic corporate objectives and values, the specific Trading Standards Service objectives are to:

- i) Identify and tackle rogue traders effectively and promptly.
- ii) Provide the best advice to Dorset businesses to ensure they trade fairly and safely, in compliance with trading standards law.
- iii) Create informed and educated consumers in order to help them tackle their consumer problems.
- iv) Focus on the needs of vulnerable consumers to safeguard their independence and well-being.
- v) Deal with the farmed animal disease threat to the countryside through thorough, preventative animal health and welfare enforcement.
- vi) Strive for continuous improvement to provide a service that is fit for the future.

- 2.3 These objectives help the Service contribute to the overall vision of the County Council, namely:

"Improving the quality of life for people in Dorset, now and for the future"

- 2.4 The full CTSSP and operational work plan that flows from that, illustrates how trading standards, and food work in particular, contributes to the particular key strategic aims of the County Council. These priorities and aims are:

- PEOPLE & COMMUNITY: Improve life chances, health and independence for people within thriving and safe communities.
- ECONOMY & TRANSPORT: Improve Dorset's transport and economy.
- ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE: Safeguard Dorset's unique environment.

- EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICES: Develop public services fit for the future.

(The full text of 'Our Role In Dorset' and the outcomes sought is available on the website www.dorsetforyou.com)

- 2.5 Of these priorities, the most relevant to food standards enforcement and advice work is the potential for the Trading Standards Service to help improve Dorset's economy. This is through advice to businesses on how to comply with food standards legislation, by provision of business advice by telephone helpline, or contact with Dorset businesses, especially those with a Dorset base serving a wide area. Ensuring the Dorset based aspects of the Olympic Games are not undermined by unfair trading are also an ingredient. The Service can also help 'improve life chances, health and independence for people within thriving and safe communities'. Such a contribution can be made through response to food safety alerts to ensure harmful foodstuffs are removed from the market, and by ensuring food labelling accuracy and promotion of healthy choices from compliant, informative labelling.
- 2.6 The role that the Service can play through its food standards enforcement activity contributes to a wider health agenda. The Local Government Association, Food Standards Agency and LACORS (Local Authority Coordinators for Regulatory Services), through their 'Food Vision', have an aim of 'promoting the production of, and access to, safe, sustainable and nutritious food, with the aim of improving local community health and well-being'. The Public Health White Paper 'Choosing Health' also previously acknowledged the important role of local authorities in the health agenda. Relevant examples would be through measures to help reduce childhood obesity, or reduce salt intake.
- 2.7 Dorset's local Trading Standards authority also seeks to play its part contributing to the Strategic Objective of the Food Standards Agency which operates at the national level, to:
- 'Improve food Safety and the balance of people's diets'.

The outcomes sought nationally to support this are also relevant in guiding local food standards work. The outcomes are:

- Food produced or sold in the UK is safe to eat.
 - Imported food is safe to eat.
 - Food products and catering meals are healthier.
 - Consumers understand about safe food and healthy eating, and have the information they need to make informed choices.
 - Regulation is effective, risk-based and proportionate, is clear about the responsibilities of food business operators, and protects consumers and their interests from fraud and other risks.
- 2.8 The Service will continue to work in partnership with authorities across the region where such work delivers effective outcomes. The South West Regulators Forum (SWeRF) continues to develop and may bring opportunities during the year of a coordinated regulatory approach to add value to some areas of work.
- 2.9 The Service has a commitment to work closely with District Council Environmental Health services locally, and there is recognition that we share aims in relation to securing food safety across the County. (Further detail on joint working at 4.12)

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Organisational Structure

- 3.1.1 The Trading Standards Service is part of the Regulatory Services Cost Centre which in turn is part of the Adult and Community Services Directorate, one of four directorates reporting to the Cabinet of Dorset County Council. At April 2010 County Councillor Andrew Cattaway is the Portfolio Holder for areas of responsibility including trading standards. Service Plans are submitted to the Community Overview Committee which recommends approval to Cabinet, while the Performance Overview Committee monitors the performance of the Service. Councillor David Fox is the 'Champion' for Regulatory Services.
- 3.1.2 Statutory food and animal feeding stuffs services are delivered through four Trading Standards teams, which are assisted by the Cost Centre shared Service Support team. The Service can currently call on 14 suitably qualified officers. The structure is set out in an appendix to the CTSSDP.
- 3.1.3 An officer from the Trading Standards Management Team, Jon Harris, has lead responsibility for food standards. This role includes linking with external contacts in the South West region, many of which share food related objectives with the Trading Standards Service and for paying particular attention to legal changes in food standards law.
- 3.1.4 The Cabinet has responsibility for appointing Public Analysts for food examination and analysis and also for the appointment of the Agricultural Analyst. The following Public Analysts are appointed for Food purposes, with the only addition being Miss J Green, an additional analyst at Hampshire Scientific Services :

Mr S Dyer Miss J Green	Hampshire Scientific Services (Hampshire County Council, Regulatory Services), Hyde Park Road, Southsea
Mr D Arthur Mr R Ennion Mr J P Wootten	Eurofins Laboratories Ltd, 318 Worple Road, London
Mr C Heide Dr A Smith	Somerset Scientific Services (Somerset County Council, Consumer Protection Department), County Hall, Taunton

The County Council has appointed Mr D Arthur as Agricultural Analyst and Mr R Ennion and Mr J P Wootten as Deputy Agricultural Analysts, all from Eurofins, for the purposes of the Agriculture Act 1970.

3.2 Scope of the Food Service

- 3.2.1 The County Council's Trading Standards Service has responsibility for the enforcement of legislation controlling food quality standards, food labelling and for the quality and labelling of animal feeding stuffs. Environmental Health services in local district or borough councils (Appendix 1) deal with food hygiene issues. The County Council also enforces the food hygiene regulations but only at premises of

primary production. This covers all farm premises including arable farms and market gardens.

- 3.2.2 Some feed hygiene and animal-by products enforcement work may on occasions be carried out by staff funded under a Framework Agreement with DeFRA, working within the Trading Standards Service. Some inspection work may occasionally be delivered using trained and qualified agency staff but no arrangements are currently in place. That noted, all aspects of the food service are delivered by the Service's staff.

3.3 Demands on the Food Service

- 3.3.1 The rural nature of the County means that the food and agricultural industries are of significant importance to the local economy. The Trading Standards Service helps support the Direct from Dorset local origin scheme through trader audits and by assisting producers with quality system and product traceability issues. This enables their locally produced foodstuffs to be readily identified at retail level and thereby encourages support from the consumer for Dorset produce.
- 3.3.2 The Service is now also participating in the local promotion and maintenance of the 'Buy with Confidence' trader approval scheme, operated across the South of England. While the main target businesses are in the home maintenance area, local food companies may take up the scheme which will bring a need for specific audits to ensure they operate to the standards of the scheme before using the associated logos and claims.
- 3.3.3 Dorset's Coastline holds World Heritage Status bringing tourist appeal and associated marketing potential for locally produced goods, underlining the importance of ensuring place of origin claims are fair and reasonable. Annual visitor statistics show that around 2.7 million visitors stay in Dorset each year with nearly 12 million day visitors, illustrating the importance of tourism to the economy. With the sailing events of the 2012 Olympic Games being based in Weymouth and Portland, there is increased demand for planning to address any food related issues which may arise, and particular restrictions in relation to Olympic related claims which now must be taken account of.
- 3.3.4 The Service will continue to build genuine partnerships to contribute to the health agenda. It will aim to support the Healthy Weight Strategy for Dorset through relevant Dorset Strategic Partnership groups and initiatives that contribute to the Local Area Agreement target on reducing obesity. In the context of food enforcement, the Trading Standards Institute's report 'Making the Connection - Trading Standards: Contributing to Public Health' highlights that food standards enforcement work can be used to promote better informed consumers; consumers who can influence businesses to produce healthier safer food; regional projects supporting public health strategy, and be used to support healthy eating initiatives, improvements in health of vulnerable groups and initiatives to reduce allergic reaction incidents.
- 3.3.5 Nationally, food alerts continue to raise awareness of particular food contamination issues, with non declaration of key allergens continuing to feature regularly. Alerts will be responded to (as set out in section 4.4.1)
- 3.3.6 The Service contributes to a SWERCOTS' structure for delivering regional projects, policy and enforcement initiatives. The 'Healthier Communities Commissioning Group' is specifically given responsibility for the food chain, healthy eating and animal feed hygiene. Specific 'Task Groups' are set up to tackle particular needs, and deliver certain regional enforcement tools.

- 3.3.7 The Service is keen to identify national and regional projects and initiatives of value to Dorset, and seize opportunities to make local enforcement more effective through more widely coordinated work. Recent examples have included nationally funded sampling on imported food, including checks on coffee for toxins.
- 3.3.8 These demands help shape the activities set out for the year, and in addition to the risk based visit programme, other proactive activities are heavily focused toward locally produced goods with a strong commitment to home authority responsibilities. Furthermore the Service has a commitment to reacting and adapting plans to tackle issues that are highlighted through the regional intelligence gathering system, and are the subject to intelligence reports from the South West Regional Intelligence Coordinator for Trading Standards.

3.4 Enforcement Policy

- 3.4.1 The Enforcement Policy for the Service has been drawn up and agreed regionally to help drive a consistent approach (See appendix to CTSSP). It also reflects more recent enforcement options for the service and addresses the needs of the Regulators' Compliance Code, and the findings of the Rogers report into national and local priorities for regulators. The Enforcement Policy is supplemented where necessary by detailed operational quality assurance procedures.
- 3.4.2 The County Council has signed up to the Enforcement Concordat under which advice, guidance and openness are considered to be key elements of the manner in which compliance with legislation is achieved. To all intents and purposes prosecution is seen as a last resort and will arise where there has been fraud, negligence, public safety has been put at risk, or advice or warnings have been ignored.
- 3.4.3 Application of this Policy and these principles means that compliance is generally achieved on food standards issues without resorting to formal action. In 2009-10 no formal action (prosecution or formal cautions, known as Simple Cautions) was taken on food standards matters. Major non-compliances were tackled by revisits made to businesses to check after breaches had been identified and advice given.

4 SERVICE DELIVERY

- 4.1 Trading standards services in relation to food standards are delivered through a mix of trader advice; consumer complaint investigation; sampling and premises inspection and other monitoring. Whenever possible food standards services are delivered alongside other trading standards service responsibilities such as weights and measures, unfair trading, and product safety for example, with a single comprehensive visit being used where visits are required. The Service recognises the advisory aspect of all visits to businesses and will continue to treat visits as an opportunity to support local businesses with legal advice, as well as checking for compliance.
- 4.2 The Service continues to focus on high risk inspection visits as a priority with some medium risk businesses being visited through targeted projects to address particular areas of non-compliance. Complaints may also trigger enforcement visits.

4.3 Service Delivery Points

- 4.3.1 The first point of telephone or email contact for consumer complaints from Dorset residents, is the Consumer Direct service, available on the nationally promoted number 08454 04 05 06. Protocols are in place to ensure that food complaints are passed, if appropriate straight away, to the Service for response. The Service has in place a 24-hr emergency call-out arrangements, answer phone on all publicly advertised telephone lines, voice messaging on officer direct dial telephone numbers and the dorsetforyou.com Internet site provides information on all areas of activity.
- 4.3.2 Businesses can access the Service via the dedicated Business Advice Line (01305 224702).
- 4.3.3 Consumers, businesses and others requiring a response on any Trading Standards matter can also access the service by:
- general enquiries telephone number 01305 (Or 01202) 224012
 - generic email tradingstaxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx.xx
 - writing to us at Colliton Annexe, Colliton Park, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Full details of accessibility and service standards are set out in an appendix to the CTSSP.

4.4 Areas of Focus for Service Delivery

- 4.4.1 This year the following priority areas have been identified through the business planning process, which takes account the current demands of stakeholders be that businesses, consumers, government or response to trends for example. This year's priorities are:

- **Business Advice**
The provision of advice to businesses on request to help ensure compliance is a vital strand of enforcement work. A dedicated Business Advice Line (01305 224702) is provided though a rota of trained officers and visits are also made to business requiring help in interpretation of the law.
- **Home Authority Companies**
Encouraging a collaborative approach with key locally based businesses trading beyond Dorset boundaries, to ensure legislative compliance while reducing the burden on business from other trading standards services and other agencies. A positive response will be made to any requests made to establish new Primary Authority agreements as promoted by the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO), although to date no interest has been expressed.
- **High Risk Food Suppliers**
Those businesses identified as high risk using nationally accepted risk assessment.
- **Food Fraud**
This is an area of work of national priority recognised through the continued work of the Food Standards Agency's Food Fraud Team. Regional and local intelligence will also help shape our work in this area as will inspections that will be project and complaint driven. Opportunities will be sought to link to national and regional projects. Current areas of concern include food

adulteration, substitution, counterfeiting and local claims.

- **Using Intelligence and response to national alerts**
The Service will contribute to intelligence locally, regionally and nationally through the new extended Trading Standards intelligence database. We will continually monitor for any emerging issues that may affect Dorset business and consumers that may necessitate a response and refocus to our priorities. Where national food alerts are received for action the Service will liaise with District Council colleagues to ensure uniformity and non duplication of enforcement. Where food alerts are received for information food officers will be advised of action required as appropriate.
- **Allergens**
Ensure compliance with allergen declarations on pre-packed foods and raise awareness amongst caterers, including take-away outlets, of the dangers of undeclared allergens in meals. The emphasis here is now on Dorset home authority companies.
- **Healthy Eating**
The Service will continue its work on healthy eating through its strategic partnership work in supporting The Healthy Weight Strategy for Dorset. Through The Healthy Weight Action Plan the Service will work with partners such as District Council Environmental Health and NHS Dieticians to encourage caterers to provide healthy food options. Funding has been secured through Dorset NHS PCT to support this work which will be piloted in the Weymouth & Portland and East Dorset District Council areas. A national toolkit to support trading standards services engage with local bakers to reduce salt in bread will be used to support and extend the work already underway to encourage local bakers meet industry voluntary salt reduction targets. Consumer advice and education will also form an important part of work in this area.
- **Sale of food beyond use-by date**
Previous project work has illustrated that problems of this nature are ongoing and improvements will continue to be sought where companies' own checking systems have not prevented 'out of date' from being offered for sale.
- **Imported Food From Third Countries**
Supplies of food imported from outside the Economic Union, are worthy of scrutiny, with the example of melamine in food being an issue in the last year. This will be addressed by means of participation in a South West regional partnership project.
- **Claims at Catering Establishments**
Claims of products offered being local to Dorset, and those relating to food being organically produced will be examined through visit and sampling checks.
- **Medicine Residues in Meat**
Sampling will explore residues of veterinary medicines present in meat, against permitted maximum levels.

- **Animal Feed Mills**
To ensure locally based producers of animal feed have quality systems in place and legal compliance is achieved. This includes the analysis of samples taken against the composition claims made.
- **Hygiene at Premises of Primary Food Production**
A risk based programme of visits assessing hygiene at premises of primary food production (i.e. livestock and arable farms).
- **Spirit Substitution**
An available enforcement toolkit will be employed to check if Dorset shares problems found nationally with substitutions of cheap alternatives, adulteration or counterfeit product, some of which has been identified as unsafe elsewhere.

- 4.4.2 These priority areas will include the key traditional measurable activities of inspections, sampling, complaints and service request. A breakdown of these activities is helpful to those, such as the FSA and peer authorities, who audit enforcement work. These ingredients also feature in the returns on enforcement activity to the FSA and subsequently the EU. This also assists analysis of trends.
- 4.4.3 These priorities will be addressed through small projects or sampling exercises and a brief project plan will be drawn up in advance and reported to the Trading Standards Management Team. These outline the target premises, whether samples are formal or informal with other methodology, resources needed and timescale. Results will be reported in the same way and progress monitored as part of the overall regular performance management process.
- 4.4.4 With all projects and sampling exercises officers will be aiming to ensure that appropriate attention is given to mobile premises and other market stall type outlets, and also to Internet sales.

4.5 Food and Feeding Stuffs – Premises Inspections

- 4.5.1 Premises Profile: The premises database holds details of approximately 3600 food and 2200 animal feeding stuffs premises. These premises are risk assessed in accordance with LACORS Risk Assessment Scheme. LACORS guidance suggests high risk premises are comprehensively inspected annually, medium risk every 2 years and low risk every 5 years. This guidance has not been able to be met due to previous reductions in resources and now also reflect a change in approach to one of 'no visit without reason'. This reflects the changing national emphasis away from routine inspection visits. However, other more targeted project based visits will be employed in an effort to ensure unfair trading practices are identified and challenged.

	RISK			TOTAL
	High	Medium	Low	
Food	122	1333	2165	3620
Animal Feeding Stuffs	4	272	1939	2215

- 4.5.2 Programmed Inspections: The service will undertake comprehensive inspections of all high risk premises. The relevant targets are:
- Food high risk comprehensive inspections 122
 - Animal feed high risk comprehensive inspections 4

- 4.5.3 Comprehensive premises inspections to medium and low risk food and animal feed suppliers will only take place as required through a targeted and project based programme. This shift away from routine comprehensive inspection is a product of Dorset's budgetary constraints and from taking account of 'better regulation principles', leading to greater emphasis on business advice and a targeted enforcement activity approach. The Service will continue to respond to any national guidance from the Local Better Regulation Office.
- 4.5.4 It is estimated that revisits will be made to 15 per cent of premises inspected. To undertake this programme of inspections, revisits and targeted project based food visits an estimated minimum of 223 officer days (1.25 fte) is required.

4.6 Food and Feeding Stuffs Complaints

- 4.6.1 All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Dorset County Council Trading Standards Service Quality Assurance Manual (SDP1 Dealing with Complaints and Enquiries; SDP 11.3 Dealing with Food Complaints).
- 4.6.2 In 2009-10 the Service handled 47 food complaints, with just 4 animal feed complaints. Resources applied to such complaints would therefore only be in the region of £1500 for sample analysis or examination and an estimated 0.5 FTE. It is possible that complaints may result from attention being given to health and nutritional claims becoming increasingly focused on by consumers.

4.7 Home Authority Principle and new Primary Authority arrangements

- 4.7.1 **Proactive:** The authority recognises the importance of supporting Dorset based businesses who market their products and/or services outside of the county and therefore fully supports the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) Home Authority Principle. To achieve this we will ensure all 17 food businesses for which we act as Home Authority (as listed on the LACORS website) will receive one full visit during this year. An estimated 10 officer days is required to meet this demand.
- 4.7.2 **Reactive:** Advice, Home Authority referrals and complaints concerning these businesses will be dealt with in accordance with the Trading Standards Service Quality Assurance Manual. Based on previous years, it is estimated that the Service will receive 95 contacts relating to Home Authority businesses from other authorities, requiring around 34 officer days to meet this demand. As has been experienced in 2008/09, extensive and often urgent demands over short periods can be required in reacting to recalls or other high risk food standards issues.
- 4.7.3 The Service remains keen to respond to any needs arising from the development of the 'Primary Authority' principle which has been promoted by the Local Better Regulation Office since April 2009, with very little take-up nationally. No businesses have expressed an interest in changing the current 'Home Authority' arrangements, which in Dorset are widely appreciated.

4.8 Advice to Business

- 4.8.1 The Service provides a business advice service, which includes a freepost address and "local call" telephone line. The Service deals annually with around 2000 requests for advice from businesses, although only approximately 3 per cent of these are in relation to Food Safety Act matters and just a handful on animal feeding stuffs. In particular, emphasis is given to assisting businesses in ensuring that new products

comply with legislation and proactively informing businesses of changes in the law that will affect them. Delivery is in accordance with the Trading Standards Service Quality Assurance Manual (SDP 6.1 Procedure for Advice to Businesses). For food standards issues the advice given during and after a visit is a significant way in which business advice is delivered.

- 4.8.2 Email groups have been set up to distribute key information to business. Support is also given to the Direct from Dorset Scheme and visits are made to, and advice given to, members. Officers will also respond to specific demands for talks to particular food producing based groups, such as has been provided for small local honey producers previously.
- 4.8.3 A minimum of 0.75 officer posts (full time equivalents) is required to deal with business advice on food standards issues.
- 4.8.4 The 'Buy With Confidence' trade approval scheme may attract applicants from food businesses and any such applications will lead to an initial audit and checks on the business concerned before they are given authority to display the logo to better promote themselves to consumers. While food businesses are not the key target for this scheme, it may hold appeal to local producers. Any applications will be treated as a priority but it is difficult to predict workload in this area, in relation to food standards.

4.9 Food and Animal Feeding Stuffs Sampling

- 4.9.1 The aim of sampling food and feeds is to provide a means of checking a small proportion of the final products that are presented to Dorset consumers, and for that final check to ensure foods and feeds are of the quality and description demanded, and that they are adequately labelled. Analysis of samples ensures that businesses are putting advice and guidance into practice.
- 4.9.2 The policy of the authority in relation to food and feed samples is that samples are taken:
- to ensure the compliance and safety of Dorset produced products (this will include ingredients and finished foods),
 - to address concerns raised by complaints from members of the public, including businesses,
 - to support national, regional, and local projects and trade audits,
 - to respond to concerns from alerts or intelligence on potential or actual problems found elsewhere,
 - to reflect the level of risk from lack of legal compliance, or
 - generally to support priority areas identified in this plan.
- 4.9.3 This year financial commitment to spending specifically on food and feeding stuffs sampling and analysis will be £18,000. It may be possible to retrieve some funding via any FSA co-ordinated national sampling.
- 4.9.4 Food and feeding stuffs sampling form part of home authority contact, high risk inspections and other project and responsive work. Activities which will include sampling are summarised in Appendix two.

- 4.9.5 Identification and registration of animal feed premises is required. Emphasis will be on those arable farms that grow crops for animal feed. The sampling programme will focus on deleterious substances, vitamin levels and compliance with the statutory statement.
- 4.9.6 The following resources have been set aside for these exercises (incorporating a total of around 150 samples):
- A sampling budget of £18,000 (£11,500 food; £6,500 feed)
 - Staff resources of an estimated 30 days.
- 4.9.7 To ensure best use is made of limited sampling resources an in-house Screening Test Laboratory is operated by the Service. This can provide a limited range of informal tests. To ensure the validity of screen tests conducted, a random selection from the samples tested are sent as control samples to the Public Analyst in accordance with Quality Assurance Procedure (SDP7 Screen Testing: In-House Laboratory).
- 4.9.8 Continued use will be made of the developing UK Food Surveillance System, a national database to assist with the co-ordination of sampling, and allowing for better targeting of food samples. Improvements are being made to the way this links to the Service's main FLARE database.

4.10 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

- 4.10.1 All information received will be passed to the appropriate District Council Environmental Health service in accordance with Dorset County Council Trading Standards Service Quality Assurance Manual Procedure SDP1 – Procedure for dealing with complaints and enquiries and SDP 11.2 Detention/Seizure of food. Based on previous experience the resource requirement is negligible.

4.11 Food Safety Incidents

- 4.11.1 Food Alerts from the Food Standards Agency will be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Practice. Where a major alert 'For Action' arises the Trading Standards Service will seek to coordinate the activities of other partner Local Authorities across Dorset and will apply resources from other areas of the Service as required.

4.12 Liaison with Other Organisations

- 4.12.1 The Service has liaison arrangements in place to ensure consistency and co-ordination of enforcement activity. The South West of England Regional Co-ordination of Trading Standards group (SWERCOTS) brings together authorities from across the region at a strategic level (Strategy and Policy Group) and has included specialist liaison through a virtual (email) Sectoral Interests Group. Food standards issues are fed into the regional 'Healthier Communities Commissioning Group'. Inter-authority auditing is carried across the region, promoted by SWERCOTS member authorities. Further liaison takes place between Heads of Services from this Service and District Environmental Health services, and meetings of the specialist food officers from Dorset food authorities (Appendix 1). This facilitates sharing of best practice and common problems and challenges. Where particular food fraud

problems came to light it may be possible to draw on the skills and resources of the regional Scambusters Team.

4.12.2 Valuable links to District Council Environmental Health services are maintained, with regular meetings of food practitioners to share best practice and intelligence on problem areas.

4.12.3 Through liaison and joint working across the County Council and other local agencies, and through links established in the Dorset Strategic Partnership, food labelling and composition issues will be highlighted in order that food standards work can be used to impact on health issues, such as childhood obesity, where possible.

4.12.4 The Service has a formal framework agreement with DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and works to has memorandums of understanding with Dorset Police on information sharing and Proceeds of Crime Act work. Some jointly funded work is being currently carried out with the NHS Primary Care Trust. There are other less formal links and operational contact with other public services such as the Food Standards Agency, HMRC, Dorset Fire and Rescue Service, Environment Agency, the Health and Safety Executive, British Cattle Movement Service, and the National Farmers Union.

4.13 Food and Feeding Stuff Safety and Standards Promotion

4.13.1 Each year a number of activities aimed at promoting awareness of the Service and raising the level of knowledge about trading standards issues by businesses and consumers in Dorset are undertaken. The Service recognises that by raising awareness and understanding of food labelling amongst the public it can facilitate informed healthy eating choices to be made.

4.13.2 Details of these initiatives are set out in the CTSSDP. Food standards work and key messages for consumers and businesses are imparted through the following mechanisms:

- press releases and media contacts to respond to issues and alerts that arise
- appropriate contribution and support to local food publication "Gut Reaction", produced by Dorset food authorities
- use of the 'Food Vision' website to promote initiatives such as the 'bag for life' with nutritional labelling information
- highlighting work through the South West Public Health Observatory
- County Council's newspaper 'Your Dorset' delivered to all households in Dorset
- articles in other appropriate publications
- guidance notes and checklists will be identified, stocked and made available and where appropriate produced by this Service to assist businesses in complying with legal requirements
- the Dorset website portal, www.dorsetforyou.com, including the Trading Standards Institute's TS Broadcast package with updated advisory leaflets
- talks to key consumer and business groups organisations, including food input where appropriate

- response to requests for talks to local groups or students, with static displays where appropriate
- use of an interactive IT package ('talkingshop') for young people/ schools, for which a food module is available
- use of a mobile display trailer tour at appropriate events, highlighting trading standards enforcement and advice issues

4.13.3 Throughout the year these opportunities will be used to highlight aspects of food work where the service can make a more positive contribution to the wider health issues, and in particular those relevant at a local level.

4.14 Statistical Monitoring

4.14.1 Arrangements are in place for providing statistical monitoring returns to the FSA and these will be adhered to by the Service.

4.14.2 Continued attention will need to be given to the cross-referencing of the database against environmental health records of registered food premises; documented procedures to control reporting of data; review of the coding structure; and raising awareness of data accuracy issues amongst staff.

5. RESOURCES

5.1 Financial Allocation

5.1.1 The total expenditure budget for the Service for 2010/2011 is approx £1.4 million. This is not separated out by functional areas such as specifically for food standards.

5.2 Staffing Allocation

5.2.1 The Service employs 14 officers who are authorised to undertake food standards enforcement for quality assurance purposes (3 being senior managers not involved directly in operational enforcement). Of these 13 have obtained lead assessor status.

5.3 Training

5.3.1 Suitably qualified officers will carry out all inspections. In addition, food hygiene training and health and safety equipment is provided to all officers undertaking food enforcement duties. In-house training on a variety of issues includes appropriate updates on food standards. There will be ten officers undergoing varying stages of formal professional training (Diploma in Consumer Affairs and Trading Standards – DCATS) and the difficulties in progressing through the required steps of the national qualifications are significant causing frustration for trading standards authorities generally.

5.3.2 The training requirements of individual officers are discussed at their annual Performance and Development Reviews (PDR). Annual training needs are incorporated into the CTSSDP. The training budget is used to best accommodate those requests. As new legislation is announced, this is considered by the enforcement specialist and any implications for the Service reported to the Management Team. Response includes the provision of in-house or external training for all appropriate operational staff. The Service aims for all officers authorised for

food enforcement duties to receive a minimum of ten hours training throughout the year. Priority will be given to those officers employed in proactive food enforcement and advice roles. Records of all qualifications and training are held centrally on a County Council database.

6 REVIEW

6.1 Quality Assessment

- 6.1.1 The Service is an ISO 9001: 2000 registered company and is subjected to an annual quality assurance audit by National Quality Assurance.
- 6.1.2 The County Council has achieved Investor in People (IIP) Accreditation with the last reassessment confirming this status being in June 2007. An authority-wide assessment is planned for June 2010.
- 6.1.3 Through the SWERCOTS regional grouping an inter-authority auditing network is supported, allowing a form of peer review against FSA requirements and the Service's procedures. The Service is to be audited in May 2010. Also a further and broader examination of the Trading Standards Service will take place through a peer review process in the Summer of 2010.
- 6.1.4 While neither of the two remaining national performance indicators relate specifically to food standards work, NI 182 is relevant as it deals with the satisfaction of businesses with the service. Feedback from food businesses, as with others, is gained through survey to see to what extent they believe that they have been treated fairly and the contact with Trading Standards helpful.

6.2 Review Against the Service Plan

- 6.2.1 Achievements against the Service Plan will be reviewed by the Trading Standards Management Team during the year and all specific measurable targets (Appendix 2) monitored. Any significant variations will be explored and corrective action taken using the regular Management Team's performance monitoring process.
- 6.2.2 Regular reviews through the Trading Standards Management Team may lead to additional tasks being required and/or variance to the plan. Significant variations will be reported to the Performance Overview Committee or Community Overview Committee as part of the Directorate's performance monitoring arrangements. The reviews, in particular at the half year stage, will help inform the 2010/2011 plan
- 6.2.3 The Service's management team will respond to intelligence sources such as national and local complaint levels, feedback from surveys, stakeholder information and trader contact. This is in line with the 'National Intelligence Model' (outlined in CTSSDP). The service will reset priorities as appropriate via the Trading Standards Management Team.
- 6.2.4 Performance is discussed at meetings between the Head of Regulatory Services and the Director for Adult and Community Services. The Performance Overview Committee will have the opportunity to scrutinise performance by the Service, and that work meets planned objectives.
- 6.2.5 Reports to Food Standards Agency will be made via the annually required Monitoring Returns.

6.3 Areas for Improvement

- 6.3.1 Any identified areas for improvement or development highlighted throughout the year will be incorporated in the Food Service Plan for 2010/2011. These can be identified from staff suggestions, feedback from business and consumer feedback mechanisms, team meetings and management team sessions. Any urgent amendments to the current plan or planned targets will be agreed by the Trading Standards Management Team and documented, with any variations being reported as noted above.

References:

- i) Community Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan 2010/2011
- ii) Food Standards Agency Guidance on Service Plans
- iii) Local Government Association and Cabinet Office Enforcement Concordat
- iv) Food Safety Act 1990 Code of Practice
- v) Food Safety Act 1990 Code of Practice Guidance
- vi) Home Authority Principle (LACORS), and Principal Authority Guidance (LBRO)
- vii) Trading Standards Institute –‘Making the Connection –Trading Standards: Contributing to Health’
- viii) Dorset Trading Standards Quality Assurance Manual

Appendix 1:
Dorset Food Authorities

County Area

Dorset County Council
Christchurch Borough Council
East Dorset District Council
North Dorset District Council
Purbeck District Council
Weymouth & Portland Borough Council
Weymouth Port Health Authority
West Dorset District Council

Outside the County area:

Bournemouth Borough Council
Borough of Poole Council

Appendix 2

Food Service Plan Targets 2010-2011

This summarises the targets or task estimates contained in the Food Service Plan.
This table will be used to review progress.

Tasks	Target/ Estimate*	Achieved/ Progress	Notes
Home/ Originating Authority Full Visits	16		Also form part of high risk
Food Inspection: High Risk	120		
Food Inspection: Medium Risk (not comprehensive)	As per project		
Food Inspection: Low Risk (not comprehensive)	As per project		
Feed Inspection: High Risk	4		
Feed Inspection: Medium Risk (not comprehensive)	As per project		
Feed Inspection: Low Risk (not comprehensive)	As per project		
Total Programmes Inspections*	120		
Revisit rate*	15%		
Food/ Feed Complaints*	60		
Service Requests/ Business Advice*	50		
Press Releases	3		
Respond to Food Alerts*	5		
Media Contacts	10		
Gut Reaction publications contributed to	2		
Other articles drafted	2		
Projects	Target/ Estimate*	Achieved/ Progress	Notes
Sale of food beyond use-by date	Complete		
Claims at Catering Establishments	Complete		
Spirit Substitution	Complete		
Animal feed mills samples	Complete		
Hygiene at primary food producers	Complete		
Other agreed planned priorities	Target/ Estimate*	Achieved/ Progress	Notes
Allergens	Evidence of action/ outcomes		
Healthy Eating			
Allergens emphasis with Dorset producers			
Imported Food From Third Countries			
Medicine Residues in Meat			
Regional partnership working			
Use of Food Surveillance System	All samples on		
FSA statistical monitoring requirements	Returns made		
Updates to website as appropriate	Updates made		
Use e-mail groups to alert business to changes	Appropriate alerts sent		
Enforcement Action	Target/ Estimate*	Achieved/ Progress	Notes
Prosecutions*	n/a		
Formal Cautions*			
Written Warnings*			