

Individual Decisions

The attached reports will be taken as an
Individual Portfolio Member Decisions on:

5 July and 6 July 2007

Ref:	Title	Portfolio Member	Page No.
ID1442	Food Enforcement Plan	Geoff Findlay	1
ID1443	Trading Standards Performance Plan	Geoff Findlay	27
ID1446	50mph Speed Limit – A343, Sandpit Hill Newbury	Keith Chopping	62
ID1439	Newbury Parking Strategy Zones N1 & NW1	Keith Chopping	66

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Food Enforcement Plan		
Report to be considered by:	Cllr Geoff Finflay	on:	5 July 2007
Forward Plan Ref:			

Purpose of Report:

Seek approval for the 2007/8 Food Enforcement Plan

Recommended Action:

Approve the Plan or amend prior to approval.

Reason for decision to be taken:

- The Council is required by the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement to consider its approach to food law enforcement and to produce a Food (Law Enforcement) Plan.

List of other options considered:

- None

Key background documentation:

- Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement

Portfolio Member:	Geoff Findlay
Tel. No.:	(01635)
E-mail Address:	gfindlay@westberks.gov.uk

Contact Officer Details

Name:	Sean Murphy
Job Title:	Food and Trading Standards Manager
Tel. No.:	01635 519840
E-mail Address:	smurphy@westberks.gov.uk

Supporting Information

1. Background

The Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement

1.1 In October 2000 the Food Standards Agency issued its 'Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement' (the Agreement). The Agreement was designed to enable the FSA to be proactive in setting and monitoring standards in terms of local authority food enforcement. The key requirement of the Agreement is that local authorities produce an annual 'Service Plan' outlining their planned activity in the field of food law enforcement for the forthcoming year. Service plans are required to:

- focus debate on key service delivery issues;
- provide an essential link with financial planning;
- set objectives for the future, and identify major issues that cross service boundaries; and
- provide a means of managing performance and making performance comparisons

1.2 To assist local authorities in producing a plan guidance was issued regarding the format. This would also help the FSA to compare plans and approaches. This central guidance became known as 'The Standard'. Whilst there is some scope for locally defined objectives the basic format is to be followed by all local authorities. 'The Standard' requires local authorities to give information in their Food Plans about:

- the services they provide in relation to food enforcement;
- the means by which they will provide those services;
- the means by which they will meet any relevant performance targets; and
- how they intend to review performance and address any variance.

1.3 The guidance states, 'we expect local authority enforcers to adopt a balance of techniques and approaches in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the public and the environment and not to rely on one method'.

1.4 The Standard recognises that most local authorities already have in place a framework of service planning which may include corporate objectives, annual reports, service plans and best value plans. The Food Plan is to be seen as a natural extension of the existing process. That is the starting point. In summary, the Standard requires that the Food Plan follow the following format:

Section 1 – Service Aims and Objectives
Section 2 – Background
Section 3 – Service Delivery
Section 4 – Resources
Section 5 – Quality Assessment
Section 6 – Review

In addition to information on food safety (hygiene) and food standards (quality and labelling) the Plan is also required to examine the council's enforcement programme in relation to the enforcement of legislation relating to animal feedingstuffs. The reason for this being that food eaten by farmed animals will eventually enter the human food chain.

2.0 The West Berkshire Food Plan

- 2.1 This is the seventh Food Plan produced by the Council. Following the restructuring post Public Protection Services the plan now outlines the work of both the Trading Standards and Environmental Health Services in the field of food law enforcement.
- 2.2 In keeping with previous years the plan takes a holistic approach to our work in protecting the food chain from plough to plate by using a combination of inspection, sampling, enforcement and business and consumer education to ensure that the interests of both consumers and legitimate businesses are maintained. In particular it takes forward our work in terms the Food Hygiene Award Scheme and hygiene and nutrition education initiatives.

Appendices

Appendix A – 2007/8 Food Enforcement Plan

Implications

Policy:	Council Priority – A Healthier Life By promoting good standards of hygiene, food safety and nutrition.
Financial:	All financial implications are met through existing budget provision.
Personnel:	None
Legal:	Enforcement of Food, Agriculture & Animal Health legislation is a statutory requirement.
Environmental:	Elements of food chain enforcement have environmental implications eg monitoring pesticide usage and disposal of waste food & animal by-products.
Equalities:	Education & training is available in a range of languages, as are many of the advice leaflets. Those groups identified as being more vulnerable to food poisoning and those vulnerable to food poverty have been considered when drafting the Plan.
Partnering:	None
Property:	None
Risk Management:	None
Community Safety:	None

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council: Graham Jones

Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:	Brian Bedwell
Planning Committee Chairman:	N/A
Ward Members:	N/A
Opposition Spokesperson:	Roger Hunneman
Advisory Members:	N/A
Local Stakeholders:	Trading Standards South East Liaison Group, Health Protection Agency,
Officers Consulted:	Relevant Officers in Trading Standards and Environmental Health and Licensing
Trade Union:	None

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

INDEX

1.	Service Aims and Objectives	Page 3
1.1	Aim	Page 3
1.2	Links to Council Objectives & Plan	Page 4
2.	Background	Page 6
2.1	Profile of the Local Authority	Page 6
2.2	Organisational Structure	Page 7
2.2.1	West Berkshire Council Service Structure	Page 7
2.2.2	Food Service Structure	Page 7
2.3	Scope of the Service	Page 8
2.4	Demands on the Service	Page 8
2.5	Enforcement Policy	Page 9
3.	Service Delivery	Page 10
3.1	Food & Feedingstuffs Premises Inspections	Page 10
3.2	Food & Feedingstuffs Complaints	Page 10
3.3	Home Authority Principle	Page 12
3.4	Advice to Business	Page 13
3.4.1	Food Hygiene Training	Page 13
3.5	Food & Feedingstuffs Inspection & Sampling	Page 13
3.6	Control & Investigation of Outbreaks & Food Related Infectious Diseases	Page 15
3.7	Food Safety Incidents Food Alerts	Page 15
3.8	Liaison with Other Organisations	Page 16
3.9	Food & Feedingstuffs Safety & Standards Promotion	Page 17
3.9.1	Business Education Initiatives 06/07	Page 17
3.9.2	Business Education Initiatives 07/08	Page 17

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

3.9.3	Consumer Education Initiatives 06/07	Page 17
3.9.4	Consumer Education Initiatives 07/08	Page 18
4	Resources	Page 19
4.1	Financial Allocations	Page 19
4.2	Staffing Allocations	Page 19
4.3	Staff Development Plan	Page 20
5	Quality Assessment	Page 20
5.1	Quality Assessment	Page 20
6	Review	Page 21
6.1	Reviews Against the Service Plan	Page 21
6.2	Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan	Page 21
6.2.1	Key Issues	Page 21
6.2.2	Food Team Staffing Issues	Page 21
6.2.3	Inspections	Page 22
6.2.4	Improvements to the Premises Database	Page 22
6.2.5	Information Available to the Public	Page 22
6.3	Areas of Improvement	Page 22

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Aim

The Council's Environmental Health and Trading Standards Services work to ensure the safety and quality of food throughout West Berkshire and to protect the integrity of the food chain, from "plough to plate".

To achieve this we aim to provide the highest level of consumer protection whilst seeking to protect the interests of legitimate business. We believe that every resident and visitor to West Berkshire has the right to enjoy safe, wholesome and accurately labelled food.

Objectives

- To ensure food prepared and sold in the District meets the standards laid down by law and that food hygiene requirements are met. This is achieved by carrying out a risk based programme of inspections based on LACORS and Food Standards Agency guidelines.
- To carry out an effective programme of sampling, analysis and checking food, fertilizers and animal feeding stuffs with respect to composition, hygiene and labelling.
- To respond to consumer enquiries relating to animal health, food & feeds safety and quality.
- To encourage good practice and provide training to ensure personal hygiene & food handling techniques are of the necessary quality by working with West Berkshire residents and businesses.
- To promote food, animal health and feeding stuffs safety and standards by providing education campaigns linking in with central government and other local government initiatives.
- To ensure that high levels of animal health and welfare standards are maintained and by promoting bio-security through an effective programme of animal health & welfare inspections and reacting to outbreaks in accordance with DEFRA guidance.
- To respond to all requests by traders for advice on compliance with food, feeds and animal health legislation including operation of the Home Authority principle.

The annual work programme for both Services is a combination of inspection, sampling, trader and consumer advice and investigation of complaints. In appropriate cases formal legal action will be taken for breaches of legislative requirements.

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

1.2 LINKS TO COUNCIL OBJECTIVES & PLANS

In April 2007 the Council published its Council Plan 2007-2011 defining outcomes for the next four years. The plan identified sixteen priority corporate outcomes encompassing a range of targets across all areas of the West Berkshire Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy and the shared vision for the District.

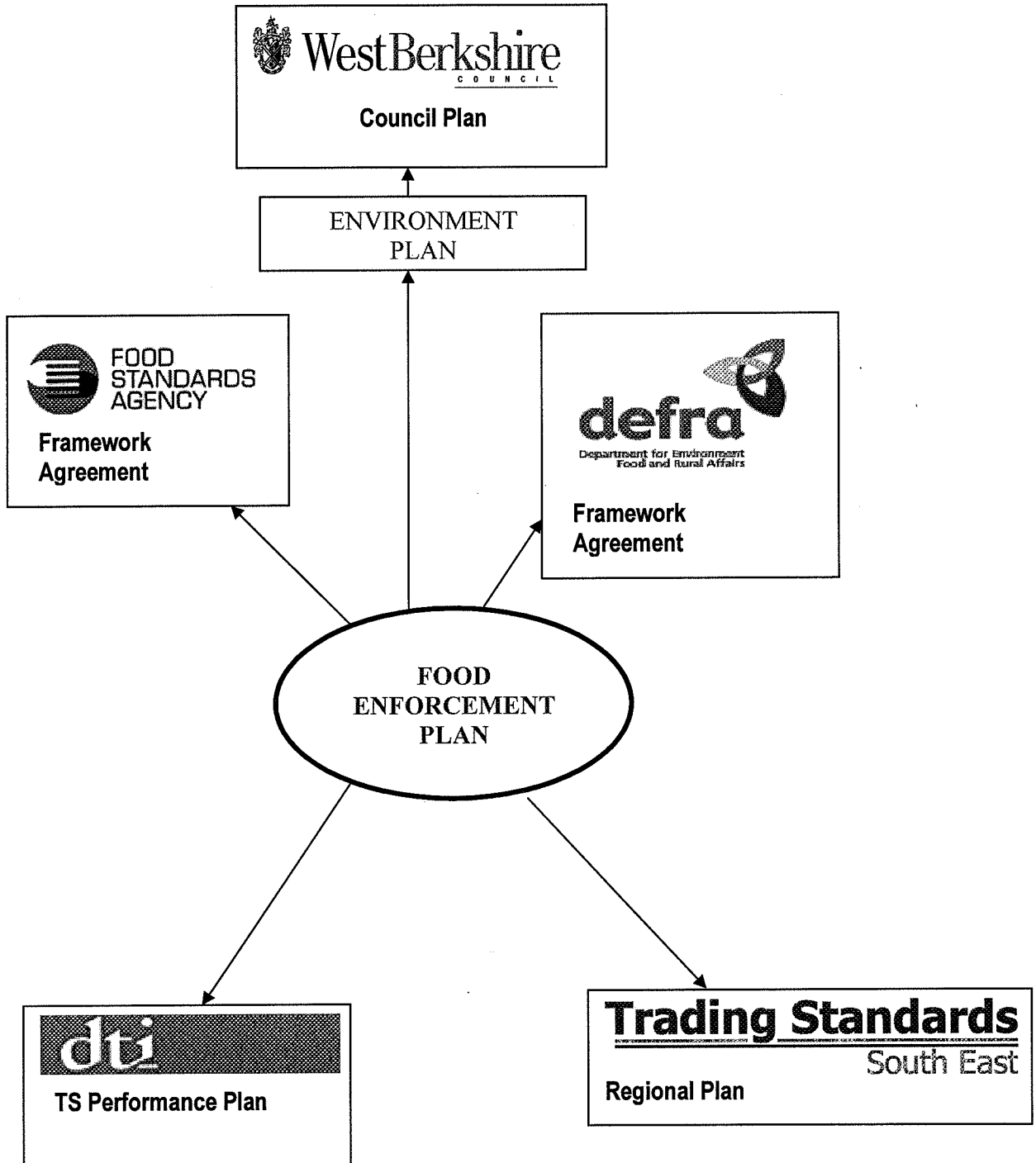
The work of the trading Standards and Environmental Health Services supports the aims and objectives as set out below:

Council Objectives	Service Activity
Thriving Town centres	Promoting food safety, standards and health via education campaigns Supporting the reputable business community
Including everyone	Tackling consumer detriment Enabling consumers to make informed choices Commitment to improving health and community safety and reducing social exclusion
Safer & Stronger communities	Promote good public health Reducing crime relating to Food Standards, Food Hygiene and Animal Health
Successful schools and Learning	By delivering high quality integrated services through partnership within the local authority and with central government and others
Protecting vulnerable people	Promoting food safety, standards and health via education campaigns
Cleaner and greener	Promoting and working with local food producers via business advice and education

The Food Plan, the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) and the Environment Service Plan are submitted annually for Member approval. Progress against the Plans is reported quarterly and the BVPP is reviewed annually by District Audit

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

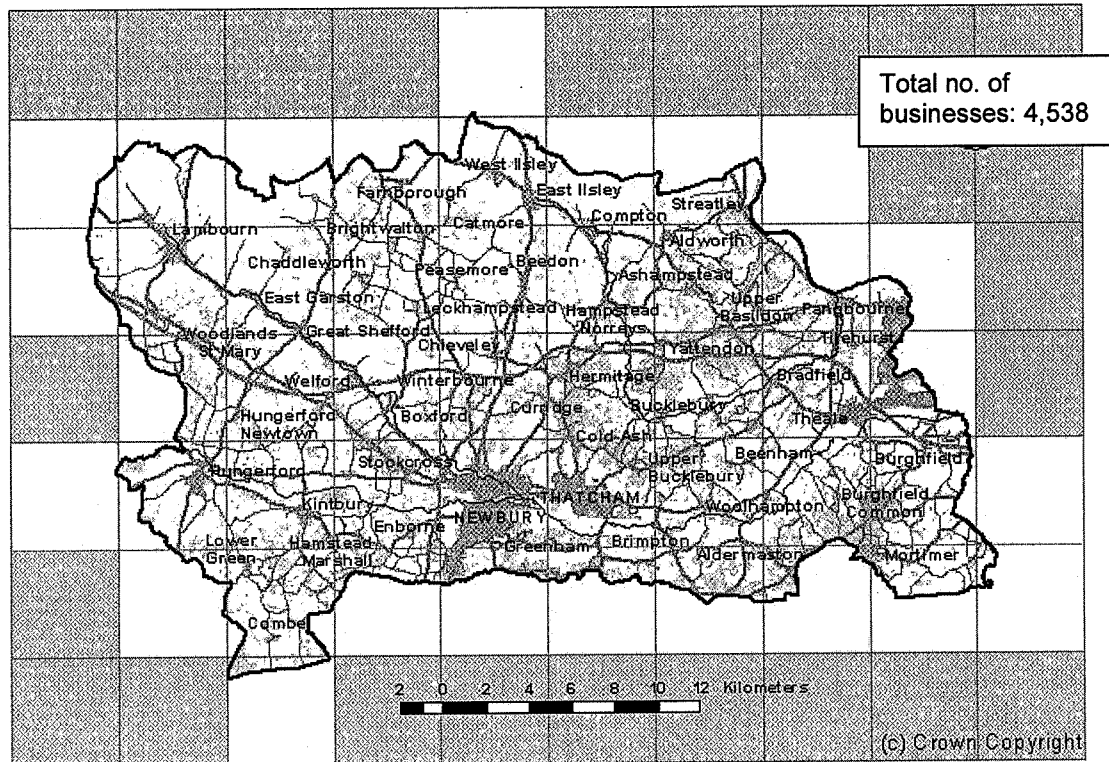
The following diagram illustrates the linkage between various West Berkshire Council (& other) relevant plans.



FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 PROFILE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY



West Berkshire makes up over half of the geographical area of the county of Berkshire – covering an area of 272 square miles. The district is primarily made up of chalk downlands, loosely centred along the lower reaches of the river Kennet, which rises in Wiltshire and flows through to join the Thames at Reading.

There is a population of just over 144,900 with just over half the population living in settlements on the western Reading fringe and along the Kennet valley. The largest urban area in the district is Newbury/Thatcham, where a third of West Berkshire residents live. Other significant towns are Hungerford with about 5,000 residents and Theale with a population of about 2,500.

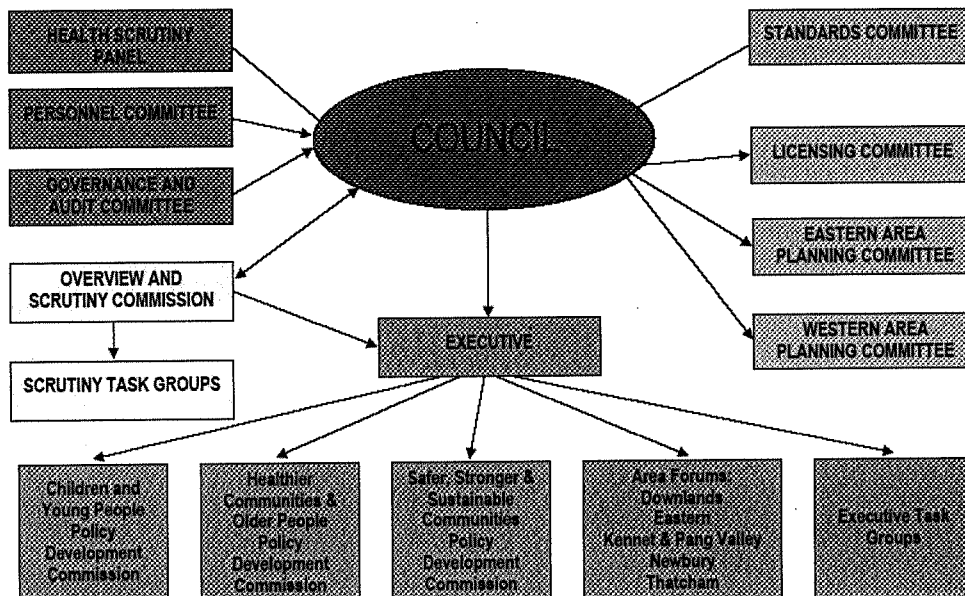
There are approximately 1550 employees working for the local authority, 1000 of whom are based in Newbury. There are approximately a further 3000 working in schools across the District.

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

2.2 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

2.2.1 West Berkshire Council Services Structure

West Berkshire Council Committee Structure - 2006 / 2007



2.2.2 Food Service Structure

The food enforcement services fall within the remit of the Trading Standards Service and the Environmental Health Service. Specialist scientific support is provided by appointed Public Analysts and the Public Health Laboratory Service.

See Appendix 1 :The Food Hygiene team is part of the Environmental Health Service and reports to the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, who is a qualified Environmental Health Officer.

See appendix 2 :The Food Standards, Agriculture and Animal Health functions form part of the Trading Standards Services which is managed by the Trading Standards Manager who is a qualified Trading Standards Officer.

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

2.3 SCOPE OF THE SERVICE

The Services have responsibility for the following areas of food enforcement work.

- Food Hygiene Inspections and sampling
- Food Standards Inspections and sampling
- Food Complaints
- Fertiliser Sampling
- Infectious Disease Control
- Registration of Food Related Premises
- Registration of Feed Premises and Feed Standards Inspections and Sampling
- Food Hygiene Training
- Nutrition Training
- Food Standards, Health and Animal Health Promotional initiatives working with local communities and businesses
- Animal Health and Welfare, including animal movement licences
- Business Advice

Where appropriate, other relevant inspections (e.g. safety, pricing and weights & measures) are carried out in conjunction with food standards inspection. This will depend upon the premise type and the risk assessment attached to that premise.

2.4 DEMANDS ON THE SERVICE

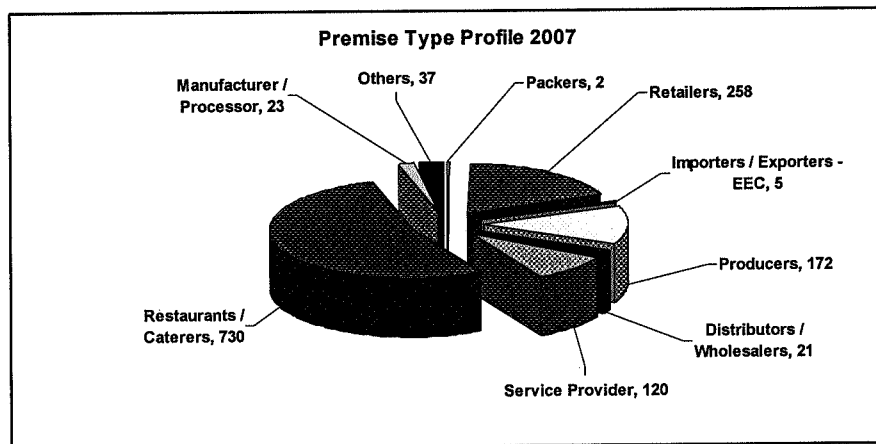
Figure 1 summarises the premise profile that informs the work plans of the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Teams

Workload is split between reactive work and proactive work. Reactive consisting primarily of consumer complaints or requests for advice from traders and proactive being mainly inspection of premises, sampling and education based on well established & recognised risk analysis.

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

There are no unusual West Berkshire food issues although there are a high number of catering and agriculture businesses. English is the first language of most West Berkshire food business proprietors. However, provision for advice, information & assistance is made for the small number of non-English speaking food business proprietors with the use of nationally developed leaflets, subscription to Language Line and the National Register of Public Service Interpreters.

It is worth noting that pre-planned work programmes can be affected by the introduction of new legislation, food hazard warnings and major incidents involving human and animal infectious disease outbreaks.



Contact details and opening times for Service:

Section of Service	Address	Telephone	Opening Hours
General enquiries and advice for Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Council Offices Faraday Road Newbury RG14 2AF	01635 519930 Out of hours service 01635 42161	Monday - Thursday 08:30 – 17:00 Friday – 08:30 – 16:30 Monday-Thursday 17.00 – 08.30 Friday-Monday 16:30 – 08:30

2.5 ENFORCEMENT POLICY



Enforcement is conducted by Officers in accordance with the Enforcement Concordat. The final independent decision on the appropriateness of legal action is taken by the Council's Legal Services in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

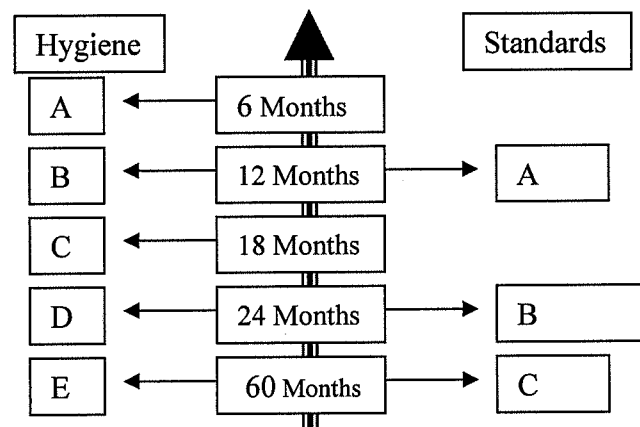
3 SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 PREMISE INSPECTIONS

The Services aim to achieve a 100% inspection rate of all premises due for an inspection within any given year. This is determined in accordance with laid down risk assessment criteria.

3.2 Food Hygiene and Standards Inspections

Food premises are graded and given a risk rating for food safety and food standards. Each risk band has a set interval for inspection. Assessments are carried out at each premise inspection and where necessary a new risk scoring is applied and the inspection period adjusted.



Food Standards and hygiene inspections of trade premises are carried out in accordance with published Food Standards Agency and LACORS¹ risk assessment guidelines.

3.2 Food Standards and Hygiene Inspections

The authority intends to inspect:

- 100% Category A – C for hygiene and standards
- 100% all initially un-rated food standards premises
- To deal with all other hygiene inspections by an alternative strategy

Samples may be taken from premises outside the inspection programme.

The inspection target for each year can be found in Figure 2a, b, and c.

¹ LACORS – Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services3

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08**Figure 2a - Food Standards Inspection targets for 2006/7**

Risk Category	Inspection target for 06/07	Inspections carried out in 06/07	No. of Premises 07/08	Inspection target for 07/08	Officer days
A	5	5	6	6	2
B	124	105	214	106	35
C + UNR	606	101	616	381	127
Total	735	211	836	493	164

- Assumes average of 3 inspections per day.

Figure 2b - Food Hygiene Inspections

Risk Category	Inspection target for 06/07	Inspections carried out in 06/07	No. of Premises 07/08	Inspection target for 07/08	Officer days
A	6	13	7	14	7
B	56	82	57	59	30
C	314	348	533	407	203
D	95	36	159	133	66
E	144	116	285	217	108
Totals	615	595	1041	830	414

- Assumes average 2 inspection per day.

Figure 2c - Animal Health

Risk Category	No. of premises	Inspections required per year	Inspection target for 07/08	Officer days
High	74			37
Medium	103			51
Low	350			175
Total	799*			263

- Assumes an average of 2 inspections per day
- * Includes 39 NIR and 233 not assessed)

3.2 FOOD & FEEDINGSTUFFS COMPLAINTS

During the course of each year the Service receives over 500 food and animal health related enquiries. Many of these enquiries are classified as 'low' risk although reports of alleged food poisoning are sometimes received. Whereas routine and 'low risk' enquiries will be dealt with within 2 working days (Service Policy) by phone or a standard letter, more urgent cases will receive immediate attention. Premises complained against are also notified and comments sought. A breakdown of all complaints or requests for advice or information for each year is illustrated in the chart in Figure 3 below:

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08**Figure 3 - Number of enquiries received by the Trading Standards and Environmental Health Teams:**

Complaints	Received 06/07	Expected 07/08	Officer days*
Food Hygiene	345	300	150
Food Standards	81	70	35
Animal Health	109	100	25

*Assuming can deal with 2 complaints per day.

3.3 HOME AUTHORITY PRINCIPLE

West Berkshire has a significant number of national and international companies within its boundaries. The Team aims to build strong links with all companies operating in West Berkshire to achieve a consistent enforcement approach and to provide sound business advice.

The Council acts as the 'Home Authority' for a number of companies (HiPP Nutrition, English Provender Company and Pepsico, which incorporates the 'Tropicana' brand) The 'Home Authority' scheme is documented on LACORS website.

3.4 ADVICE TO BUSINESS

Both Services aim to provide as much effective advice to West Berkshire businesses as possible. Figure 4 below provides an estimated breakdown as to number of enquiries and resource allocation.

Many of the requests from food businesses relate to new business registration and advice on legal responsibilities.

The Services also provide advice to those developing food businesses which typically includes reviewing plans, drawings and products to ensure all legislative requirements are met as well as dealing with the practical challenges that face any new food business.

As part of our commitment to business advice senior officers from both Trading Standards and Environmental Health attend monthly Business Link Seminars which act as an open forum to discuss relevant matters with current and prospective business proprietors. This covers any small or medium businesses with fewer than 250 employees.

Figure 4 - Number of business enquiries received by the Trading Standards and Environmental Health Teams

Enquiries	Estimated 07/08	Officer days
Food Hygiene	100	100
Food Standards	40	40
Animal Health	20	10

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

3.4.1 FOOD HYGIENE TRAINING

Officers who work on a day to day basis in food law enforcement run all the Food Hygiene courses. All levels are available but the most popular is the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Foundation Level course which the Team are accredited to teach.

During 2006/7 a total of 11 courses were run which arose out of a combination of businesses contacting us for assistance, officer recommendations for employers and employees and formal requirements under the relevant legislation. 135 people attended and 134 passed.

3.5 FOOD & FEEDINGSTUFFS INSPECTION & SAMPLING



The food that people eat has a direct impact on their health. Poor hygiene standards, microbiological and chemical contamination, and the excessive use of additives, allergens and poor nutritional content can all lead to ill health.

Millions of people each year report suffering symptoms of food poisoning. In the most severe cases death or long term injury can be the result.

In the remainder of the cases the symptoms of food poisoning cause untold misery and many millions of lost working days. The victims are often the very young and elderly.

Poor nutrition is a primary cause of illness in the UK, leading to thousands of premature deaths through heart disease, cancers and other related illnesses.

Sampling is targeted at local manufacturers and companies whose head offices are based in our area as well as locally controlled produce. In addition we actively participate in nationally and regionally co-ordinated sampling programmes.

The policy of the Authority in relation to sampling is as follows:

- Complaints and enquiries
- Locally produced
- Locally controlled
- Co-ordinated sampling plans e.g. through regional groupings or nationally through the Food Standards Agency
- New or changed legislation
- Other local or national issue, reason or concern

Figure 5 provides a list of samples taken in 2006/07 with sample targets for 2007/08 and resource allocation. Figure 6 details regional and local sampling plans for food standards known at the time of writing. Further sampling plans are being developed in accordance with the above policy.

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

Businesses are always informed of unsatisfactory sample results and follow up action taken where necessary. All formal sampling is carried out in accordance with legal requirements and using accredited laboratories to ensure that all results can be used if formal investigations are carried out.

Officers sample animal feedingstuffs to ensure that all farmed animals receive an appropriate level of nutrition and to monitor the quality of on-farm mixing in the area. This helps to ensure that the quality of food being produced for the food chain is maintained and that all relevant legislation is being adhered to.

Where samples fail the appropriate action is taken this may consist of advice, re-sampling or, where appropriate, formal enforcement action may be taken.

Figure 5 - Number of samples taken by the Trading Standards and Environmental Health Teams:

Samples	Samples taken 06/07	Planned 07/08	Officer days*
Food Hygiene	51	142	71
Food Standards	117	200	50
Animal Feed	21	20	10

Figure 6 – Food Standards Sampling Plan for 07/08

Samples	Analysis	Sampled from	Region/project
Soups	Hidden salt/sodium levels	Retail	TSSE (Trading Standards SE)
Childrens meals at tourist attractions	Nutritional content	Retail	TSSE
Any food product with Omega 3 Claims	Omega 3 content	Retail	TSSE
Soft drinks/ confectionary	Type & quantity of colours in imported foods	Retail	HSS
Local Honey	Quality – acidity/sugar/HMF	Retail	HSS
Alcopops	Sugars/colours preservatives	Retail	Local
Breakfast bars and cereals	Nutritional labelling	Retail	Local
Meat kebabs	Compositional standards	Retail	Local
Body building supplements	Composition and labelling	Retail	Local
BBQ foods	Presence of additives	Retail	Local
Animal Feeds	Mycotoxins	On Farm	Local

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

3.6 CONTROL & INVESTIGATION OF OUTBREAKS & FOOD RELATED INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The Infectious Disease Incident (IDI) investigation process involves both the Berkshire Health Protection Team (BHPT) & the Environmental Health Service. The Service response to incidents is swift to secure accurate epidemiological data from the patient.

HIGH RISK

- Multiple Cases
- Food Handlers
- Vulnerable Groups
- E.Coli 0157 cases

Information provided by the BHPT is processed and categorised as LOW or HIGH risk. High risk incidents are investigated by officers to identify the cause of the illness.

Officers investigate implicated premises in the West Berkshire Council area. Otherwise the appropriate department will be contacted and informed of the

case details. There is close liaison with medical practitioners and patients at all times.

LOW RISK

- Isolated Cases
- Non-food Handlers

Officers investigate the possible causes of illness by looking at patient diet and activity history in low risk cases. If trends are identified officers may re-define the case as high risk i.e. if a patient's illness is linked to another case.

Data is fed into the Regional and National statistics for Infectious Disease.

The Service investigates numerous IDI's (outbreaks) with over 50% of cases coming through direct from the public. Many others come via the Health Protection Agency. The most commonly reported causative agent is Campylobacter. See Figure 7 for related statistics and resource allocation.

Figure 7 - Number of Infectious Disease Referrals:

IDI's	06/07	Expected 07/08	Officer days
Food Hygiene	215	300	30

3.7 FOOD SAFETY INCIDENTS FOOD ALERTS (formerly Food Hazard Warnings)

Food Alerts are the Food Standards Agency's way of letting local authorities and consumers know about problems associated with food and, in some cases, provide details of specific action to be taken.

Both services deal with many alerts each year, which require various levels of action including contact with local suppliers and distributors to ensure that products are recalled from sale. See Figure 8 for related statistics and resource allocation.

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08**Figure 8 – Number of Food Hazard Alerts**

Food Hazard Alerts	06/07	Expected 07/08	Officer days
	68	Projected figure 75	Absorbed into officers workload.

3.8 LIAISON WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

In order to ensure that the services we provide deliver maximum benefit to the end user we liaise with the following organisations:

- Food Standards Agency
- Trading Standards South East
- Defra
- Licensing
- LACORS
- Education
- Chartered Institute of Environmental
- Berkshire Food Group
- Social Services
- DTI
- Building Control
- Trading Standards Institute
- NHS
- Health Protection Agency

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

3.9 FOOD & FEEDINGSTUFFS SAFETY & STANDARDS PROMOTION

3.9.1 Business Education Initiatives 06/07

In 2006/07 the then combined service carried out promotional activities at the local Business Link seminars which were held 8 times during the course of the year. The services also linked with all other Berkshire authorities in promoting the Food Standards Agency Safer Food Better Business campaign which involved holding a seminar and working with targeted businesses.

3.9.2 Business Education Initiatives 07/08.

Both Services will continue to attend the Business Link seminars and will be also promoting the new website: www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/westberks, which holds specific guidance leaflets aimed at food businesses. This site will also provide information on a full range of trading standards legislation as well as information about the Service's activities.

Berkshire Food Award

The Berkshire Safe Food Award is a scheme that is running across all the Berkshire Local Authorities to highlight those catering businesses which are operating high standards of hygiene and food safety in their premises.

Through the awarding of a certificate of either a Pass, Bronze, Silver or Gold we aim to recognise the efforts and commitment of these businesses and to encourage other caterers operating at a lower standards to put in the extra effort required to achieve a higher award.

Total Officer Days: 25 days

3.9.3 Consumer Education Initiatives 06/07.

Consumer Education Bid – Healthy Food on a budget 06/08

Both food standards and food hygiene activities were also promoted to target audiences of young mothers on low incomes. Week long workshops were held where participants were provided with information about food hygiene, food labelling, and nutrition linking in with the Primary Care Trust dieticians. A local chef gave a cookery demonstration on how to cook healthy nutritious meals on a budget and 2 recipe books were also devised. In addition to this a free crèche was offered to assist parents in attending the course.

In addition a 'Health Day' was held by the Food Team in conjunction with The Primary Care Trust and Countryside and Environment Dept together with a local chef to promote healthy eating.

A number of School Talks were carried out in 2006/07 promoting the same message.

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

3.9.4 Consumer Education Initiatives 07/08.

Healthy Eating on a budget

The success of the courses held in 2006/07 has led to several requests from local community groups for further similar courses. The Service is aiming to hold at least a further 5 courses will be held over the course of the coming year, including a planned 10 week course consisting of 2 hour sessions for pregnant and teenage mothers.

Provision of Nutrition Education Programme in Schools

The Service intends to introduce the existing programme provided in Hampshire Schools in order to raise awareness of the issues around the importance of good nutrition to health. This will be introduced at a number of key stages. We are also looking at a healthy eating roadshow and an extension to the previous years successful projects relating to low income families.

Attendance at local events

The Trading Standards Service is intending to be present at the Royal County of Berkshire Show once again this year and also intends to participate in at least another 2 events in 2007/08 as well as attending a number of the Farmers Markets.

Food Safety Week

This year the focus of Food Safety Week, which takes place in June each year, will be on the Berkshire Safe Food Award, and will see the promotion of the website 'Scores on the Doors' type scheme, where results of Food Hygiene inspections are made known to the public.

Total Officer Days: 45 days

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08**4. RESOURCES****4.1 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION**

The total net expenditure on Food Hygiene & Standards, and Feedingstuffs enforcement will be £371k for 2007/8. The total gross operating budget for Animal Health is £33k although there is income of £19k

The costs of supporting legal action are re-charged to the service unit and must be met from existing budgets.

The main source of income for the team is the Food Hygiene Training that we provide. As a team we run Training for both West Berkshire and Wokingham residents, total income for the team will be approximately £7400 in 2007/8.

4.2 STAFFING ALLOCATION

Activity	EH Officer Days	TS Officer Days
Food Hygiene Inspections	414	0
Food Standards Inspections	0	164
Food Complaints/Enquiries	150	35
Food Hygiene Sampling	142	0
Food Standards Sampling	0	50
Fertiliser and Animal Feedingstuff Sampling	0	10
Infectious Disease Control	30	0
Approval of Product Specific food premises	1	0
Registration of Animal Feed Manufacturers and Intermediaries	0	3
Food Hygiene Training	10	0
Food Health/Standards/ Animal Health Promotions	40	40
Animal Health and Welfare Inspections	0	263
Animal Movement Licences	0	25
Total Officer Days	787	595

All figures are estimates based on current need and previous data.

4.3 STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Council committed to the training and development of its staff and a comprehensive 'Training and Development Strategy' has been developed. Both Services now hold the Investors in People award.

Twice each year staff training needs and competence are fully assessed as well as being monitored through a series of formal and informal briefings. This process

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

cascades through the services and takes in all members of staff. Most training is provided by external training organisations including:

- The Trading Standards Institute
- The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
- South Western Provincial Council Employers Organisation
- Trading Standards South East Ltd

In addition all food and feedingstuffs related material received by the Services is assessed and where necessary circulated to staff. Ongoing matters are discussed at team meetings or regular one-to-ones. All members of staff are encouraged to contribute to the development of the Trading Standards and Environmental Health Service Plan. The proposals set out in this plan are taken into account when assessing training needs.

5 QUALITY ASSESSMENT

5.1 QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The Services currently hold no external accredited awards for its work in the area of food and feedingstuffs enforcement. Due to staff shortages the application for ISO 9002 series accreditation for the whole of the Trading Standards and Food function has been delayed. However, we have been awarded the Community Legal Service Quality Mark for Trading Standards and Food work. The standard achieved was General with Casework.

The EFQM peer review for Trading Standards Service is overdue but will be completed in 2007/08

Established principles are followed when developing the food and feedingstuffs enforcement service. For example, the development of the Service takes account of the Business Excellence Model as developed by the Society of Chief Trading Standards Officers. Additionally, the training and development of staff follows the principles of Investors in People in that the training and development plan can be linked directly to service as well as individual need.

Performance is monitored on a monthly basis against the overall programme of work for the year and against individual targets as laid down through the employee performance management system. For most statistical data the FLARE premise database is employed.

Regular assessment of performance against this plan will take place and the results are fed back to the Executive Member via the Trading Standards and Environmental Health Management Teams at regular monthly portfolio briefings. Where appropriate, Member review would be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

6. REVIEW

6.1 REVIEWS AGAINST THE SERVICE PLAN

The Council will continually review its performance against this plan. It will seek continuous improvement year on year and performance will be recorded and fed through officers to the relevant Member forum. The review process is as follows:

Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plan and submit for member approval • Submit plan to Food Standards Agency (FSA) • Staff annual reviews
Six Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report performance against plan • Six monthly staff performance and training reviews
Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance report prepared for FSA
Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Member Briefings • Performance reported to PPS management team • Staff one to ones • Monitoring of performance using FLARE • Budgets monitored • Response times monitored using FLARE

6.2 IDENTIFICATION OF ANY VARIATION FROM THE SERVICE PLAN

This Plan lays down the underlying policies on which officers can deliver the service for the West Berkshire area. The Services are currently carrying vacancies which could affect delivery of this Plan. This will be managed appropriately, targets will be adjusted and risk assessment & management techniques employed to ensure activities are concentrated on higher risk issues.

6.2.1 Key Issues

The last year proved a challenging one for the then combined service. Included amongst the key challenges were:

- Ongoing recruitment and retention issues.
- An increase in food related businesses in the area.
- 'Catch-up' with Food Hygiene and Standards inspections.
- The need for ongoing improvements to the premise database.

6.2.2 Food Team Staffing Issues

In 2006/07 there was an EHO vacancy which meant the planned food hygiene inspections were not achieved for 06/07. Once it was realised that they could not be achieved priority was given to the highest risk premises. All high risk premises were inspected.

FOOD PLAN 2007/ 08

6.2.3 Inspections

During 2006/07 food hygiene inspectors focused on premises risked A – D, visiting both overdue and due premises. The authority has managed to complete 100% of visits for A-C premises. The team plans again to visit 100% of A-C premises in 2007/8 in addition to taking appropriate action on AES category premises.

During 2006/07 the authority managed to visit 100% of A risked premises and 100% of B risk premises to carry out food standards inspections. There are now two fully operational food standards inspectors.

6.2.4 Improvements to the Premise Database

Maintenance of an up-to-date database can be problematic. In the main this is due to emergence of new premises, closing premises and premises changing hands. A project to determine the premises that will be affected by the forthcoming smoking ban has been implemented. This will have the effect of enabling data collection and cleansing to take place which will lead to a more accurate & comprehensive database.

6.2.5 Information Available to the Public

This has been another area of success with several new guidance leaflets being made available to the public and businesses. This information includes leaflets on the main infectious diseases, guidance for new food businesses, and guidance on HACCP for food businesses and information on training courses available. All this material and other information on the work of the team is available on the new improved food area of the West Berkshire website. In addition to this the authority has also implemented a new trading standards website – www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/westberks which will provide comprehensive consumer and business advice on food standards and animal welfare issues.

6.3 AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

We are continually striving to improve the efficiency of the service we provide. Below we have identified key areas for improvement for 2007/2008:

1. Continue to improve & increase joint work between food standards and food safety disciplines
2. Develop partnerships both internally & externally
3. Achieve 100% inspection rate for all food premises
4. Recruit to fill vacant posts
5. Improve performance management process
6. Improve public access to appropriate information

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Trading Standards Performance Plan		
Report to be considered by:	Cllr Geoff Findlay	on:	5 July 2007
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1443		

Purpose of Report: To consider the 2006/7 Trading Standards Performance Plan.

Recommended Action: Approve the Plan or amend prior to approval.

Reason for decision to be taken:

- It is a requirement of the Trading Standards National Performance Framework that the Plan is developed.

List of other options considered:

- None

Key background documentation:

- National Performance Framework for Trading Standards Services

Portfolio Member:	Councillor Geoff Findlay
Tel. No.:	(01635 871992)
E-mail Address:	G Findlay@westberks.gov.uk

Contact Officer Details

Name:	Sean Murphy
Job Title:	Food and Trading Standards manager
Tel. No.:	01635 519930
E-mail Address:	Smurphy@westberks.gov.uk

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 The 1999 White Paper "Modern Markets: Confident Consumers" set out the Government's proposals for modernising Trading Standards and to taking forward work on performance measures.

Trading Standards has long recognised the need for a coherent and modern national performance framework. The White Paper recognised that without an overall framework it is difficult for any of the 200 plus Trading Standards services in the UK to evaluate meaningfully their performance. It would also prove difficult to evaluate their contribution to quality of life and economic and social well being goals, either nationally or locally, because of the lack of comparable information and data.

The White Paper was followed by the Audit Commission report, "Measure for Measure". This analysed the Trading Standards Service and drew attention to the areas where the service needed to improve. These included the need for better standardisation between authorities to ensure a nationally minimum level of service provided to businesses and consumers, better consistency in the application of formal enforcement activity and better co-operation between authorities and other enforcers.

2.0 The Trading Standards National Performance Framework

- 2.1 To help trading standards services achieve these aims the National Performance Framework for Trading Standards Services was developed by the Department of Trade and Industry. This development was carried out in conjunction with LACORS (Local Authority Co-ordinating Body for Regulatory Services), the Office of Fair Trading, National Weights and Measures Laboratory and the Trading Standards Institute.

Prior to introduction in 2002 the Framework and in particular the performance planning element was piloted by 19 organisations including various local authorities. One of those organisations was West Berkshire Councils Trading Standards Service. As a pilot we played a significant role in developing the format that the plan before members today is built upon.

The purpose of the framework is to introduce performance standards for local Trading Standards Departments and to ensure that Trading Standards Services throughout the UK work towards national and local priorities in a coherent way. It was also devised in such a way as to ensure that the work of a local authority trading standards service linked into corporate objectives and met community need.

- 2.2 Another key impetus for developing the performance framework was to improve the service provided to consumers and business. It is also part the Government's productivity agenda. In summary the NPF aims to:

- provide clear priorities and core standards for a modern Trading Standards service;
- support the role of Trading Standards in the community and in contributing to key local authority priorities;
- improve performance of Trading Standards by developing a system of measurement and sharing good practice; and

- to facilitate a more coherent and consistent approach to enforcement and service delivery.

3.0 What Does the Framework Require of Local Authorities?

3.1 The National Performance Framework has three key elements: the Service Delivery Plan, the Standard and the Information Return. This report deals with the Service Delivery Plan element.

3.2 The Service Delivery Plan

The Trading Standards Service is required to draw up a Service Delivery Plan outlining provisions in key areas. The framework for the plan and the standards to be incorporated within it are laid down.

The Service Delivery Plan (SDP) falls into three parts. Part One covers the core responsibilities of the local service, its objectives, local structure and resources and expectations of the community. It aims to allow local authorities to set the 'local scene' and outline the circumstances in which they are operating. Part Two sets out priorities for the service in the year ahead and requires services to at least make some provisions in respect of each of the standards. Part Three deals with quality and review.

The plan covers all core functions of the service including weights and measures, consumer safety, consumer credit, under age-sales enforcement, business and consumer advice, road traffic law and fair-trading and fraud investigations. The plan also identifies other key functions of the trading standards service, in particular food law enforcement and animal health. However, these are not referred to in the remainder of the plan as they are dealt with by separate plans.

It is a requirement that the SDP be built clearly upon corporate and community objective. It is also desirable that the plan should also build on the national and regional priorities.

It is a requirement that the Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan be submitted for Member approval prior to submission to the DTI by the end of May.

3.3 Priorities

The priorities for the service to work towards through the plan have been identified as:

- Informed confident consumers
- Informed successful businesses
- Enforcement of a fair and safe trading environment
- Efficient, effective and improving trading standards services

4.0 The West Berkshire Trading Standards Performance Plan

4.1 In producing the attached plan we have sought to comply with all guidance and, very importantly, with the Standard. In essence the Plan incorporates the national agenda into a West Berkshire setting. It routinely refers to how the work of the Trading Standards Service contributes Council Priorities. In addition a number of projects are regional Trading Standards South East projects. In order to deliver the objectives of the plan all team leaders have received training in project management as part of their personal development.

- 4.2 The plan sits along side other plans and agreements which together drive the work of the Service i.e. Food Enforcement Plan (also subject to Individual Decision) and Animal Health and Welfare Service Level Agreement
- 4.3 The plan includes a variety & a balance of activities that are intended to provide the best protection for local residents and business. They include education and learning opportunities which are aimed at adults, young people and local businesses. Effort is focussed on a number of Council Priorities with issues such as the safety of goods (including vehicle safety), crime and anti-fraud initiatives, anti-counterfeiting, packaging and environmental controls & prevention of illegal sales of 'age restricted' products such as alcohol to young people all included. Work to combat overloaded vehicles and those breaching weight restrictions continues as do investigations into serious breaches of law by unscrupulous traders.
- 4.4 The Service Plan is produced as Appendix A.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – West Berkshire Council 2007/8 Trading Standards Performance Plan

Implications

Policy:	The plan contributes to a number of Council Priorities including Safer Communities and Cleaner Greener. These are set out in the plan itself.
Financial:	The budget for the service is set out in the plan. There are no additional budget implications.
Personnel:	Set out in paragraph 4.4
Legal:	The information return is a legal requirement
Environmental:	The draft plan contains initiatives that build upon the Council Priority of a Cleaner Greener West Berkshire.
Equalities:	The plan has equal opportunities and equal access to services at its heart.
Property:	None
Risk Management:	None
Community Safety:	Community Safety is one of the key themes of the plan and the services contributions are set out therein.

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council:

Chair Overview and Scrutiny

Commission:

Planning Committee N/A
Chairman:

Ward Members: N/A

Opposition Spokesperson:

Advisory Members: N/A

Local Stakeholders: The plan is built upon ongoing liaison with parties such as the PCT, Police and South East Local Authorities.

Officers Consulted: Staff within Trading Standards Service

Trade Union: N/A



Planning and Trading Standards

Trading Standards Service

Trading Standards Performance Plan

2007/08

CONTENTS	Page No.
PART ONE: CONTEXT & COMPARATIVE FACTORS	4
A: TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE IN THE COMMUNITY	4
1.0 Core Responsibilities of the Trading Standards Service	4
2.0 West Berkshire Council's Community & Corporate Factors	5
2.1 Community Objectives	5
2.2 Corporate Objectives – Council Priorities	5
2.3 Local Priorities	6
3.0 Aims, Objectives & Strategic Thinking	
3.1 Key Aims & Objectives	7
3.2 Links to Community & Corporate Objectives	7
3.3 Member Approval	7
3.4 The Best Value Agenda	7
3.5 National Performance Indicator BV166	8
B: LOCAL STRUCTURE & RESOURCES	
4.0 Local Authority Organisation, Accountability & Wider Links	
4.1 Council Services & Structure	9
4.1.1 Council Structure	9
4.1.2 Management Structure	9
4.2 Partnerships	10
4.3 Enforcement Forums	11
4.4 Business Support Forums	12
5.0 Trading Standards Expenditure	12
6.0 Staffing Allocation	12
7.0 Accessibility	13
C: ASSESSING COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS & FEEDBACK	
8.0 Needs & Expectations of Consumers	
8.1 Assessment of Need & Expectations	14
8.1.1 User Surveys	14
8.1.2 Analysis of Consumer Complaints	14
8.1.3 Local CABx view	15
8.1.4 Local Consumer Support Network View	15
8.2 Conclusions on Consumer Need in West Berkshire	15
9.0 Needs & Expectations of Local Business	
9.1 The Local Economy	16
9.1.1 Meeting Business Expectations	16
9.1.2 Business User Survey	16
9.1.3 Post Visit Assessments	16

10.0	Local Awareness of Trading Standards	
10.1	Consumer Survey	17
10.2	Business User Survey	17
10.3	Media Profile	17
10.4	Non User Survey	17
11.0	Demands for Specialist Services	17
PART TWO: NATIONAL & LOCAL PRIORITIES		
D: NATIONAL & LOCAL PRIORITIES		
12.0	Informed Confident Consumers	18
12.1	Consumer Advice	18
12.2	Planned Levels of Activity	18
12.3	Continuing to take account of Emerging Issues	19
13.0	Informed Businesses	20
13.1	Informed Successful Businesses	20
13.2	Continuing to take account of Emerging issues	20
14.0	Fair & Safe Trading Environment	21
14.1	Provision for securing a Fair & Safe Trading Environment	21/22
14.2	Continuing to take account of Emerging issues	22
E: EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE & IMPROVING SERVICES		
15.0	The Modernisation Agenda	23
15.1	Efficient, Effective & Improving Service Provision	23
F: QUALITY ASSESSMENT & REVIEW		
16.0	Provision for Review	
16.1	Monitoring Performance against the Plan	24
16.2	Complaints & Enquiries	24
16.3	Learning from Others	24
16.4	Benchmarking	24
16.5	Consultations	24
16.6	Meeting the Challenge of New Agenda & Future Planning	24
16.7	Identification of any Variation from the Plan	25
16.8	Identification of areas in need of Improvement	25
APPENDICES:		
A	CORE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE	26/7
B	COMMUNITY TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN	28
C	LOCAL AUTHORITY ORGANISATION – BUDGETS	29
D	STAFFING ALLOCATION	30
E	BUSINESS PROFILE	31

PART ONE: CONTEXT AND COMPARATIVE FACTORS

A: TRADING STANDARDS IN THE COMMUNITY

1.0 Core Responsibilities of the Trading Standards Service

The Trading Standards Service (TSS) in West Berkshire incorporates a number of food hygiene functions that are often associated with Environmental Health. For details of Food related activities please see the Food Plan 2007/8. The following pages set out the core responsibilities whilst the table below provides a more detailed breakdown of the functions of the Food and Trading Standards Service in West Berkshire:

See also Appendices A & B

GENERIC FUNCTION	SUB-FUNCTION
Health	All age restricted products inc. <i>test purchasing</i> Proof of Age Card scheme Local Area Agreement – Reduction of Tobacco and alcohol consumption amongst young people.
Community Safety	Product Safety - <i>inspection and sampling</i> Petroleum Licensing and Vapour Recovery Explosives and Poisons Doorstep Crime Car Crime
Economic Development	Weights & Measures - <i>Checks on weighing and measuring equipment</i> Checks on goods to ensure correct quantity Proceeds of Crime Act POCA
Food Quality and Safety	Food Quality Food Labelling Nutrition Education Quality and Labelling – <i>Fertilisers and Feedingstuffs</i>
Advice	Comprehensive Advice Service - Home Authority Liaison Complex Advice with casework Business Link
Environment	Overloading of Vehicles Movement of Waste Weight Restrictions – <i>environmental and structural</i> Unroadworthy Vehicles
Animal Health	Animal Health - Disease Control inc. contingency planning Animal Movement licensing Transport Welfare
Education	Comprehensive Consumer Education Service to: Adults & Children incl. Young Consumer of the Year and Junior citizen

2.0 West Berkshire Council's Community & Comparative Factors

In 2003 the West Berkshire Partnership published its first Community Plan which was promptly followed by the Council's Corporate Plan the latter was replaced by the Council Plan 2007-2011. The Council Plan sets out a 5 year direction for the Authority, taking into account the needs and aspirations of the community as expressed in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Trading Standards Service is a key agency in supporting the aims set out in these Plans.

2.1 Community Objectives

The Council has three stated values of **respect**, **integrity** and **ambition** and the West Berkshire Council Plan identified 3 priority themes:

- Cleaner Greener West Berkshire
- High Quality Schools
- Safer and Stronger Communities

2.2 Corporate Objectives – Council Priorities

The vision for West Berkshire is set out in the Council Plan. The Plan then identifies sixteen Council priorities that are necessary to realise this 'vision'. These are:

Priority
1. Cleaner and Greener
2. Better Roads and Transport
3. Thriving Town Centres
4. Affordable Housing
5. Vibrant Villages
6. A Healthier Life
7. Safer and Stronger Communities
8. Successful Schools and Learning
9. High Quality Planning
10. Promoting Independence
11. Excellent Performance Management
12. Protecting Vulnerable People
13. Putting Customers First
14. Effective People
15. Value for Money
16. Including Everyone

The Local Area Agreement

In addition the above priorities are drivers for the Local Area Agreement. The Trading Standards Service has a very specific role in the agreement with responsibility for 4 key reward targets and a number of non-reward targets linked to Health and Community Safety. These all relate to reducing consumption of alcohol and tobacco amongst young people. A summary of this can be found at Appendix G.

2.3 Local Priorities

The primary aim of the Trading Standards Service is **'to provide a safe and fair trading environment for all who live, visit or do business in West Berkshire'**

At a local level our approach relates directly back to the following strategic priorities:

Council Priority	Area of Trading Standards work developed from this objective
Cleaner and Greener	By ensuring compliance environmental labelling standards and packaging legislation aimed at reducing waste and recycling. We will also check the accuracy of equipment aimed at determining waste charges and landfill tax.
Safer and Stronger Communities	By promoting consumer safety and tackling rogue traders and doorstep crime and under reducing illegal under age sales. By ensuring the safe storage of explosives and petroleum.
A Healthier Life	By enforcing legislation relating to food standards and labelling and by promoting healthy eating. By reducing the incidence of illegal sales of age restricted products to young people. By promoting healthy living in schools. By enforcing the ban on tobacco consumption in public and work places.
Better Roads and Transport	By providing an enforcement service in respect of overloaded goods vehicles and weight restrictions.
Economic Well Being	By working with businesses and consumers to create a fair and safe trading environment in which legitimate business can flourish and consumers are attracted.
Successful Schools and Learning	By providing education programmes including Junior Citizen and Young Consumers of the Year Competition, raising awareness of the problems of underage sales.

3.0 Aims, Objectives and Strategic Thinking

3.1 Key Aims and Objectives

The key aims and objectives of the Trading Standards Service (TSS) are:

- Tackling consumer crime & unfair trade practices
- Reducing consumer detriment
- Enabling consumers to make informed choices
- Commitment to improving health and community safety and reducing social exclusion
- Protection of the environment
- Support for the legitimate business community
- Improvement in Service Delivery
- Provision of appropriate training & development opportunities for all staff

3.2.1 Links to Community and Corporate Objectives

See 2.3 above

3.3 Member Approval

The TSS Performance Plan and the appended Food Plan are submitted for Member approval annually.

The Environment Directorate Service Plan receives annual Member approval. Progress against the service plan is reported quarterly. The BVPP is reviewed annually by District Audit.

The following activities have received specific Member approval in the past:

- Under Age Sales Enforcement Programme (Annual)
- Proof of Age Card (one off)
- Ability to enter into LGA 1972 S101 agreements and other joint arrangements (one off)
- The approval to support the formation and membership of Trading Standards South East Ltd
- Fees & Charges (annual)

3.4 The Best Value Agenda

In accordance with the national Best Value Agenda, ***West Berkshire's Trading Standards Service seeks to provide a high quality service at an affordable cost.***

In assessing whether best value aspirations are being met the TSS considers a number of service delivery methods. During 2006/7 the service undertook a comprehensive needs review to:

- identify and develop key quality processes and procedures,
- develop a retention and recruitment scheme
- develop a training & career progression scheme
- determine how best to structure current resources to meet service demand

The resulted in a new 'grow your own' policy being introduced to ensure the service was able to deliver effectively in years to come. In 2007/8 our EFQM Peer Review will be completed and we intend to complete the accreditation of our ISO 9001 processes.

The service also jointly commissions work through the Trading Standards South East (TSSE) Liaison Group. This leads to economies of scale and a significant reduction in duplication of effort.

3.5 National Best Value Performance Indicators

Subject to confirmation the **BV 166b** score for West Berkshire Trading Standards in 2005/6 was **100%** against the standard.

The 10 indicators that make up BV166 are as follows:

- i) Does the authority have written and published Enforcement Policies formally endorsed by its Members that cover all aspects of TS?
- ii) Does the authority have risk based inspection programmes and sampling and surveillance regimes for regulatory services?
- iii) Are the programmes and regimes mentioned in ii) followed, monitored and reported on and any variations addressed within a service plan or BVPP?
- iv) Does the authority have targeted educational and information programmes?
- v) Are the programmes mentioned in iv) followed, monitored and reported on, and any deviations from the planned programmes addressed within a service plan or BVPP?
- vi) Does the authority have and implement policies procedures and standards for dealing with complaints made to the authority and does it take part within the Consumer Support Network (CSN)
- vii) Does the authority have and implement policies, procedures and standards for responding to and dealing with statutory notifications
- viii) Are the policies, procedures and standards mentioned in vi) and vii) followed, monitored and reported on, and any variations addressed within a service plan or BVPP?
- ix) Has the authority, within the last 5 years, benchmarked its resources for relevant services against similar local authorities or comparable service providers including private and voluntary?
- x) Does the authority have a range of mechanisms in place to consult stakeholders affected by their service regarding the development of the enforcement policy?

In respect of our other BVPI indicators the preliminary scores for 2006/7 were as follows:

Indicator	Target	Score
Consumer Satisfaction	75%	78.8%
Business Satisfaction	75%	88.68%
Visits to High Risk Premises	100%	100%
Business Compliance Levels	95%	

These four 'top tier' scores combined with our BV166 score provide a significant and recognised contribution to the Environment Block Score and the overall Council rating.

B: LOCAL STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

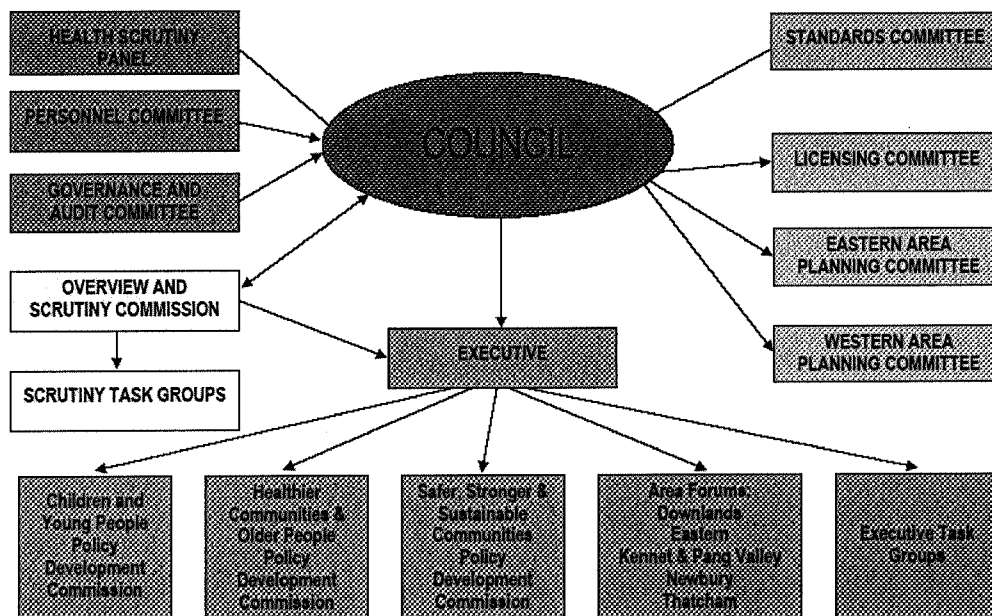
4.0 Local Authority Organisation, Accountability and Wider Links

4.1 Council Services and Structure

4.1.1 Council Structure

West Berkshire Council's decision-making is based on the separation of the Council's Executive and scrutiny functions. The principal decision making body is now the Executive, which consists of the Council Leader and ten 'Portfolio Members'. Portfolio Members have the authority to take key decisions that fall within their remit. The Portfolio Member for Public Protection, who 'champions' Trading Standards under the newly introduced LACORS scheme, has authority to take key decisions affecting the Service.

West Berkshire Council Committee Structure - 2006 / 2007



4.1.2 Management Structure

4.1.3 As a unitary authority, West Berkshire Council is responsible for the provision of all local government services in the West Berkshire Area. The Trading Standards Service is a Division of Planning and Trading Standards (which also incorporates Development Control, Building Control and Transport planning). A copy of the Management Structure is available at http://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/pdf/f/0/Management_Structure_-_Apr_2007.pdf

4.2 Partnerships

The table below gives details of partnership arrangements that the Trading Standards Service has entered into in order to further common aims and objectives:

Activity	Aim of Partnership	Partners
Tobacco Sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced access by young people to tobacco products. • Smoke Free Environments • Health Promotion 	Primary Care Trust Other Council Services Other Local Authorities Trading Standards South East (TSSE) Berkshire Tobacco Alliance
Community Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced access by young people to age restricted products and in particular alcohol and solvents. • Promotion of responsible trading • Reduction of Anti-Social Behaviour 	Local Schools Police Community Safety Officer Licensees DAAT Community Wardens
Community Legal Services Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals Protocols 	Legal Department LSC CABx
Doorstep Selling Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in doorstep selling problems and abuse through Rapid Response Unit • Education initiative aimed at banks/building societies • Reduce levels of distraction burglary 	TSSE Police Community Safety Neighbourhood Watch
Smart Citizen Competition Young Consumer of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating young people on their rights and responsibilities including those related to consumer issues. 	Local Schools
Junior Citizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging young people about risks associated with certain activities 	Police Fire Ambulance Service Utilities Rail Safety Local Primary Schools
Mainstreaming Community Safety Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce level of car crime • Reduce levels of burglary, including distraction burglary • Links to various TS issues –sale of cars from the highway, unroadworthy cars & doorstep initiatives. • Identify and tackle crime and anti social behaviour 'hotspots' 	Police Many Council Services Community Safety Officer Voluntary Sector Local Businesses

4.3 Enforcement Forums

The Trading Standards Service participates in the following enforcement forums:

Organisation	Purpose	Members
TSSE Executive	Forum to discuss and take forward issues of mutual significance Achievement of economies of scale and avoidance of duplication.	19 TSS's in GOSE Region
SELCOG – Petroleum Group	Forum to discuss petroleum enforcement issues	All petroleum authorities in South Eastern Region
TSSE Focus Groups: Performance, Safety, Food, Consumer Advice, U'age Sales, Fair Trading, Metrology, Law & Evidence, Feedingstuffs	Sharing best practice Ensure Consistent enforcement Benchmark opportunities Coordination of sampling & testing Sharing expertise	19 TSS's in GOSE Region Public Analysts
Fiscal Intelligence Group	Sharing Intelligence	Revenue & Customs, neighbouring TSSs
Assoc. of Petrol Enforcement Authorities (APEA)	Sharing best practice Ensure consistent enforcement Benchmark opportunities Coordination of sampling & testing Sharing expertise	Local Authorities (Fire, TSS, EH) HSE Oil Companies Petrol pump fitters
DEFRA Divisional Animal Health Panel	Forum to discuss animal health enforcement issues	All TSSs in region DEFRA
AFI Police and Court Liaison Group South East	Share information	Police Court Service TS AFIs
LACORS Accredited Financial Investigators Group	Sharing best practice	All Trading Standards AFIs LACORS
TSSE Intelligence Hub	Sharing intelligence	All TSSs in South East Scambusters Team Regional Intelligence Officer

4.4 Business Support Forums

The Service will work with the business community to develop a more focussed approach, shifting emphasis of the service from reactive to proactive work.

Officers lecture on the monthly Business Link new business courses to explain the Service's role and responsibilities in supporting & assisting business start-ups.

5.0 Trading Standards Expenditure

See Appendix C

6.0 Staffing Allocation

See Appendix D

7.0 Accessibility

As part of its Equalities Strategy, the Council is committed to providing appropriate support to all service users in order to have full access to all services, including:

- making arrangements for translation and interpretation
- home visits
- text phone use
- Braille or tape transcription
- presence of advocates

A recent equalities assessment concluded that the Service is highly accessible with good customer focus.

The following summarises the main routes to accessing the service:

Type of Access	Description
Personal Callers	8.30am – 5pm Mon –Thursday. 8.30am – 4.30pm Friday Other times by appointment or through 24 hour emergency service
Telephone	Times as above. Note that all advice calls are routed through to Consumer Direct.
Answerphone	Available outside normal office hours or if all lines are in use
By post	To West Berkshire Council Offices, Faraday Road.
By e-mail	Tsadvice@westberks.gov.uk
Emergencies	The Council has a 24 hour emergency service number.
Disabled Access	Building designed for wheelchair users & disabled parking spaces available.
Hearing Impaired	Minicom available
Community Languages	The Council subscribes to language line.

C: ASSESSING COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS AND FEEDBACK

8.0 Needs and Expectations of Consumers

8.1 Assessment of Need and Expectation

Over the last few years we have made a number of improvements to assess consumer needs and expectations including direct polling and partnership working. The following is a summary of our work in this area:

8.1.1 User Surveys

The service carries out monthly user feedback surveys by contacting 100% of consumers who contacted the service for advice or assistance or to register a complaint for further investigation.

2006/7 data indicates:

- >70% were satisfied with the overall level of service
- >85% felt the advice they were given was easy to understand
- >80% said they felt staff were informative

From comments received and an analysis of data the following issues are worthy of note.

- Some people have an unrealistically high expectation of the service provided. In some circumstances they expect officers to resolve complaints on their behalf rather than simply provide advice on consumer rights.
- Officers are sympathetic and helpful
- Consumers can be confused by being referred by us to Consumer Direct then back to us by Consumer Direct. This is unavoidable. An explanation is given on initial transfer.

8.1.2 Analysis of consumer complaints

Last year the then Food and Trading Standards Service received over 1700 enquiries and requests for assistance from the public. Of this a high proportion were complaints or requests for advice. An analysis of this data reveals the following main areas of concern to West Berkshire people.

1. Food labelling (including use by dates)
2. Second hand cars (including credit)
3. Home improvement related matters
4. Unsolicited home improvements.

The list is similar to previous years and mirrors national consumer complaint data but it is interesting to note that complaints about second hand cars and food & drink have overtaken complaints about home maintenance and improvement for the first time. Recent high profile television programme such as 'Rogue Trader' maybe having a positive effect. International and European Prize draw scams remain a problem whilst the high numbers of mobile phone complaints & enquiries can be explained because West Berkshire Trading Standards is 'Home Authority' to a mobile phone company and receives referrals about the company from other trading standards services nationally.

Future consumer demands remains difficult to predict. The introduction of Consumer Direct in 2005 is already having a significant effect on calls to the department. Complex civil calls and potential criminal breaches are referred back to the service for investigation. The national Consumer Direct database provides intelligence on a new national and regional level. This is being

fed back to the service through the Regional Intelligence Unit. The RIU suggests that areas of concern include:

1. Doorstep sales
2. Age restricted sales
3. Counterfeiting

All of this reflects the general concerns in the community relating to such issues of crime, anti-social behaviour and food and nutrition. The aim of this plan (along with the Food Enforcement Plan) is to address these concerns.

8.1.3 Local CABx view

The CABx have traditionally indicated that credit and debt is an ongoing issue.

8.1.4 Consumer Support Network

We have struggled to get this initiative off the ground in West Berkshire. Much of this has been down to the difficulty in recruiting staff. The concept has also been to some extent superseded by Consumer Direct and other partnership working on areas such as Consumer Direct. It is believed that work on Credit is still a priority and this will support the money lending initiative should TSSE prove successful in its bid.

8.2 Conclusions on Consumer Need in West Berkshire

Based on our current intelligence consumers in West Berkshire need:

- More information on credit and managing debt
- More information and advice on the risks involved in buying second hand cars
- Advice on dealing with unwanted callers i.e. personal and by phone
- Greater knowledge of consumer rights
- Prompt alert warnings of suspect Prize Draws and Scams

9.0 Needs and Expectations of Local Businesses

9.1 The Local Economy

Unemployment, at 1.2% (July 2006) is one of the lowest rates in Europe. 4,538 businesses provide almost 80,000 jobs for people. 85% of these businesses employ 10 people or less with the main activities being:

- Business activities, real estate & leasing – 22%
- Wholesale & retail – 19%, &
- Manufacturing – 15%

The very low rate of unemployment in the District is leading to employers recruiting from further afield and an influx of workers into the District.

9.1.1 Meeting business expectations

West Berkshire TSS subscribes fully to the 'Home Authority' Principle. This includes responding to requests for advice and handling referrals from other local authorities. The Service is Home Authority to some large companies including Vodafone, English Provender Company, HiPP Nutrition, Tropicana, Direct Wines, Dreweatt Neate, Porsche, Ecover, Pepsico, Sheepdrove Organic, Guide Dogs for the Blind & Bayer UK Ltd.

See also Appendix E

There are no unique West Berkshire business issues as far as the TSS is concerned.

The Trading Standards Service is experiencing similar recruitment problems to the rest of the West Berkshire business community particularly in respect of qualified officers. This combined with our current commitment to training means fewer 'proactive' visits and audits are being carried out than is desirable. This has resulted in some loss of regular contact with the business community which is unhelpful in developing an effective working relationship.

9.1.2 Business User Survey

The results of the last business user survey are considered too historical to be of value. A new survey will be conducted in 2007/8.

9.1.3 Post Visit Assessments

When inspections take place 'Customer Satisfaction Questionnaires' are left with business proprietors. All businesses seeking advice are also surveyed. The results in 2006/7 showed:

- 99% were satisfied with the overall level of service
- 99% thought that our advice was easy to understand
- 98% thought staff were informative
- 97% thought they were treated fairly at all times

10.0 Local Awareness of Trading Standards

10.1 Consumer Survey

The most meaningful survey carried out in recent times was that carried out by the Regional Intelligence Unit on local priorities. This highlighted the following as high priorities at this time:

- Under Age Sales / Anti Social Behaviour
- Doorstep Crime
- Counterfeit Goods
- No Cold Calling Zones
- Healthy Eating

10.2 Business User Survey

This has been reported previously – see 9.1.2

10.3 Media Profile

Relations with the local media remain extremely good with many press releases issued relating to Trading Standards work during the year. Use of local media continues to be an effective strategy in getting various Trading Standards messages across to the general public. It is extremely cost effective with a high proportion of consumers stating they were aware of the work of the service because of local media interest. Almost the full range of work was covered but particular attention was made to the following issues:

- Food hazard warnings
- Underage sales – particularly of alcohol
- Firework safety
- Animal Health issues
- Prize Draw, Data Protection, & Clothing Collection Scams
- Successful prosecutions

10.4 Non user survey

Non-users were surveyed as part of the 2003 survey. Consideration is being given to repeating the exercise during 2006/7.

11.0 Demands for Specialist Services

The Service does not currently provide any specialist services as defined in the guidance.

PART TWO: NATIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

D: NATIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

12.0 Informed Confident Consumers

12.1 Consumer Advice

The service provides a Consumer Advice Service for complex civil casework as set out in paragraph 1.0. Following the introduction of Consumer Direct the nature of this service has changed from simply giving telephone advice to taking on follow-up casework, where appropriate, with a view to resolving problems or disputes.

During the year the TSS maintained its CLS Quality Mark for General Advice with Casework.

The service also provides advice by using the Consumer Direct advice pack as well as other leaflets developed by the OFT, DTI, FSA and other government departments and agencies.

The new structure of the service based around education and advice as well as compliance should see greater success in the delivery of our aims to achieve 'informed confident consumer'

12.2 Planned Levels of Activity

The following activities are planned for 2007/8 with respect to consumer advice:

Activity/programme/project/work planned	How the activity reflects local need	Link to Council priorities
Act on casework referrals from 'Consumer Direct'	Consumer demand for more intervention	CP12
Support the post 'Farepack' campaign	Increase in awareness	CP12
Media campaigns to raise awareness of those issues identified by local and nationally RIU e.g. prize draws, under age sales etc.	Complaint analysis, customer surveys	CP12 CP7
Trickster 2 – Hold Trickster play in 3 venues across District for vulnerable consumers	Consumer complaints re: rogue doorstep sales	CP7
Junior Citizen initiative	Increase in awareness of consumer rights	CP8
Consumer Law competition	Increase in awareness of consumer rights	CP8
Firework Safety Campaign	Nationally led DTI campaign	CP7
Monitor and keep up to date website	Customer Survey	CP16
Participate in County Show and hold consumer awareness events at local attractions	Previous success and links to Defra SLA	CP16

Electric blanket and electrical PAT testing screening days with RBFRS	Previous demand high	CP12
Raise awareness of increase in Tobacco and Knives sales age limits	Part of LAA programme	CP7
Raise awareness of Counterfeiting	Previous investigations	CP7
Raise awareness Home Information Packs	New legislation –	n/a
Nutritional Information for low income families and young people. (see food plan)	Success of previous initiatives	CP6 CP12
Provide more information on credit and debt in support of new anti-illegal money lending initiatives	National Research / DTI	CP12

12.3 Continuing to Take Account of Emerging Issues

The TSS will also continue to take account of emerging issues in the following ways:

Activity	Purpose
Monitor & analyse Complaints and Enquiries – incl. those dealt with by Consumer Direct	Look for trends both locally and regionally in complaints to allow TSS to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tackle problem traders - Provide advice campaigns
Monitor Local Media	Look for changes to market place to enable TSS to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tackle problem traders - Provide advice campaigns
Examine intelligence reports provided nationally and regionally and via PIMMS.	Provide advice
Monitor Changes to legislation	Look for changes to market place to enable TSS to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tackle problem traders - provide advice campaigns
Speak regularly to partners and to vulnerable groups	Look for changes to market place to enable TSS to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tackle problem traders - provide advice campaigns

13.0 Informed Businesses

13.1 Informed Successful Businesses

It is a TSS priority to provide advice & assistance to the local business community. A well-informed business community is good for consumers and is consistent with the strategic aim of creating a strong and vibrant local economy. The following sets out the provision being made in 2007/8 for creating an informed, successful business community in West Berkshire:

Activity/programme/project/work planned	How the activity reflects local need	Links to Council priorities
Work with Business organisations and local business support organisations to encourage use of the TSS	Feedback	n/a
Introduce passed and verified stickers for metrology equipment	Success in Hampshire	n/a
Monitor new legislation and where necessary provide advice e.g. Home Information Packs, change to tobacco purchase age etc.	National Surveys	n/a
Implement LBRO recommendations	Hampton Recommendations	n/a
Promote Responsible Retailer Scheme for under age sales.	Agreed LAA target	CP7
Improve and promote web-site Information	Last Years Target	CP16
Continue with advice and information packs on anti-counterfeiting to local businesses using new anti-counterfeiting funding	Business need	CP7
Create regular contribution to business reports in local paper	Analysis of Enquiries	CP16
Business Verification service	Legal Requirement	n/a
Promote 'Home Authority Principle' and increase use	Business need	n/a

13.2 Continuing to Take Account of Emerging Issues

The above table clearly sets out or planned activity for the 2007/8 period. However we will continue to take account of emerging issues in the following ways:

Activity	Purpose
Monitor and deliver on post Hampton Recommendations	Ensuring that the business community and consumers receives maximum protection.
Monitor new legislation, guidance and interpretation	Ensuring that the business community receives relevant advice.

14.0 Fair and Safe Trading Environment

14.1 Provisions for securing a Fair and Safe Trading Environment

In the interest of residents, local businesses and visitors the Council is committed to securing a fair and safe trading environment in West Berkshire. The following sets out the provision being made in 2007/8 for doing so:

Activity/programme/project/work planned	How the activity reflects local need	Links to Council priorities
Target audits & sampling to reflect problem areas or new legislation.	Consumer Survey	n/a
Seasonal Product safety projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Electric blankets & PAT consumer electrical testing 	Consumer need – accident prevention	CP7 CP12
Road Traffic Act enforcement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overweight vehicles ▪ Weight restricted roads/ bridges 	Environmental and Safety Considerations	CP1
General licensing/ registration administration activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fireworks ▪ Poisons ▪ Petroleum ▪ Motor Salvage - Vehicles (Crime) Act 2001 	Linked to enforcement/ accident prevention.	CP7
Inspection & testing of bulk fuel measuring instruments and commercial weighbridges	Consumer need + business support facility	n/a
Support National Doorstep Crime Initiative in June and introduce monthly patrols in conjunction with Police	Consumer need	CP7
Reception & investigation of criminal complaints including referrals & notifications from Consumer Direct	Consumer need	n/a
Quantity checks on non pre-packed foods	Consumer need	n/a
Attendance at car boot and one day sales to ensure compliance with law	Consumer survey	n/a
Work with TSSE Regional Intelligence Unit and Scambusters to share intelligence and lend support to regional investigations	Consumer Survey	CP7
Implement new Commercial Practices Directive Regulations	N/A	CP7
Proceeds of Crime POCA/FI regional use of AI's across TSSE region	N/A	CP7

Arrange and conduct significant levels of underage sales test purchasing in relation to alcohol, tobacco, knives, fireworks etc.	Consumer Survey	CP7
Carry out inspection of metrological equipment based upon risk – linked to food inspections	N/A	n/a
Participate in TSSE targeted regional and national sampling projects and inspection initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical Weighing Equipment ▪ Safety of imported goods ▪ Information to consumers re: CO2 emissions on new cars. 	Consumer concerns	CP7
Enforcement of environmental controls including storage of dangerous products, road traffic enforcement and carriage of waste	N/A	CP1
Participate in National Consumer Week and other partner Initiatives	National priority	n/a
Support TUSAC and AMEC Campaigns aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour arising from alcohol illegal sales	Local priority	CP7
Carry out survey of packaging of goods and seek to sample and follow up 20 over-packaged with a view to reducing waste	Local priority	CP1
Carry out inspections of second hand car dealers to determine safety of vehicles on sale	Previous investigations	CP7
Enforcement of new Landlord Deposit Schemes	Consumer interest	CP12
Audit of antique sales	Previous surveys	n/a

14.2 Continuing to Take Account of Emerging Issues

The above table sets out or planned activity for the 2007/8 period. However we will continue to take account of emerging issues in the following ways:

Activity	Purpose
Monitor Complaints and Enquiries	Look for trends and target enforcement
Monitor local and national media	Look for trends and target enforcement
Monitor changes to legislation	Target enforcement
Work with partners to assess need	To ensure changing demands are met

E: EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE AND IMPROVING SERVICES**15.0 THE MODERNISATION AGENDA****15.1 Efficient, Effective and Improving Service Provision**

In the interest of residents, local businesses and visitors the Council is committed to securing and efficient, effective and improving trading standards service in West Berkshire. The following sets out the provision being made in 2007/8 for doing so:

Activity/programme/project/work planned	How the activity reflects local need	Links to Council priorities
Complete the service wide 'needs assessment' to address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure systems in place to train part or non qualified staff ▪ Career progression ▪ Continued competence ▪ Structure, officer roles & responsibilities 		CP14
Ensure regular team briefings take place	N/A	CP14 / CP11
Ensure regular appraisals and one-to-ones take place	N/A	CP14
Maintain CLS Quality Mark	Consumer Survey	CP13
Introduce new evidence control system	N/A	
Develop Service in line with SOCTSO EFQM Model – Peer Review to take place during 2007/8	N/A	CP13 / CP15
Continue to develop regional & national links to ensure best practice, avoid duplication of effort and wasted resource	N/A	CP15
Maintain business continuity plans and ensure all emergency response plans are up to date	N/A	n/a
Review sources of electronic and written data and databases that are used in service delivery	N/A	CP15
Develop staff training programme and monitor performance against it	Business and Consumer Surveys	CP12
Ensure formal reports are accurate and submitted on time	N/A	CP15

F: QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW

16.0 PROVISIONS FOR REVIEW

16.1 Monitoring Performance against the Plan

Service plan activities are monitored regularly to ensure that targets laid down in the Service Plan are met as follows:

Area to be Monitored	Frequency	Method
Inspections and Sampling	Monthly	Database
Complaints and Enquiries (response targets reproduced below)	Monthly	Database
Assessment of Quality – Inspections	Monthly	File Checks
Assessment of Quality – Enquiries	Monthly	In accordance with CLS QM
Compliance with Investigation Framework	Ongoing	In accordance with CPIA

16.2 Complaints and Enquiries

The service standards for complaints and enquiries are as follows:

Type of Enquiry	1st Response	Considered Response	Closure
Safety, Food & W&M Complaints	1 day	10 day	95% in 6 months
All other Complaints	2 day	10 day	95% in 6 months
HA Referral	2 day	1 month	N/A
Business Enquiry	2 day	10 day	N/A

16.3 Learning From Others

We are very keen to learn from best practice developed in other authorities & have found the work done by authorities that have received DTI innovation grants very useful. We intend to work with colleagues from across the TSSE group to improve and enhance service delivery across the region through the work of the Regional Policy Officer.

16.4 Benchmarking

The Service plans to undertake regular benchmarking, in addition to that already undertaken through TSSE, to ensure value for Money and the best possible performance.

16.5 Consultation

Plans for consultation (and publication of results of consultation) are highlighted elsewhere in this plan.

16.6 Meeting the Challenges of New Agendas and Future Planning

Changes to legislation and best practice are regularly reviewed by Principal Trading Standards Officers who have a responsibility to make recommendations & implement changes to service plans where appropriate.

16.7 Identification of any variation from plan

A service wide needs assessment is taking place as a result of the reorganisation and move to Planning and may make recommendations to vary from the plan.

16.8 Identification of areas in need of improvement

The following areas for improvement were identified in the plan and have been reproduced below as key targets for 2007/2008:

Target	Where addressed in plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information for consumers 	Section 12, Section 4.2 Section 12, 14, 4.2 CSN, CABx
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to carry out a comprehensive business needs assessment • Develop relationship with business support organisations. 	Section 13 Section 13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effective consultation with business, consumers and other stakeholders and TSSs 	Section 12, 13, 16

APPENDIX A – CORE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE

Name of Authority	West Berkshire District Council
Chief Inspector of Weights & Measures	Sean Murphy

Status of Plan	
Approved by Members	
Member Approval Pending	

Enforcement Responsibility	Description	Is this in your remit
Weights & Measures	Work relating to the accuracy of weighing & measuring equipment in use for trade and ensuring quantity of goods is within tolerance. Verification services	Y
Does your authority maintain local standards?		N
Does your authority hold Approved Body status?		N
Fair Trading	Includes claims about prices, quality or description of goods & services	Y
Product Safety	Includes monitoring goods supplied to consumers are safe & correctly labelled	Y
Food Standards	Includes ensuring food is correctly described & labelled throughout the supply chain & that applicable compositional standards are met	Y
Is this function shared with Environmental Health		N
Consumer Credit	Including monitoring licensing regime, ensuring transactions, business documents & advertisements comply.	Y
Animal Health & Welfare	Includes movement licences, monitoring welfare on farm, during transport & at markets	Y
Agricultural Standards	Includes ensuring fertilisers & animal feeding stuffs are of correct composition & labelled correctly.	Y
Age Restricted Sales	Ensuring certain products are not supplied to young persons. E.g. tobacco, knives, videos & DVDs, butane lighter fuel, alcohol,	Y
Road Traffic	Includes supply of unroadworthy vehicles, overloaded goods vehicles, weight restriction areas.	
Explosives	Ensuring fireworks & other explosives are safely stored on registered premises.	Y
Petroleum	Ensuring petrol is safely stored on licensed premises	Y
Environmental Legislation	Includes energy labelling, packaging disposal & motor fuel pollutants	Y
Licensing	Petrol	
	Explosives	
	Poisons	
	Functions under Vehicle (Crimes) Act 2002	

Additional Functions.

Specialist Services	Partners
Metrology Laboratory	Oxfordshire CC

Advice Responsibility	Description	Is this in your remit?
Are you part of a Consumer Support Network?		Not Operating
Business Advice	Through other means other than inspection & home authority	Y
Consumer Advice	Provision of advice & information to consumers + casework	Y

Indicate the level of consumer advice you provide.

Client → Level ↓	Local Tax Payers	Contract in Area	All Contacts
Information	Y	Y	Y
Assisted Information	Y	Y	N
General Help	Y	Y	N
General Help + Casework	Y	Y	N

APPENDIX B – COMMUNITY TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN**PROFILE FORM**

Name of Authority	West Berkshire District Council
Area in Hectares	70,000

Local Authority Organisation

Indicate if you have received, or are working towards, any of the following:	Received	Working towards
▪ Charter Mark		
▪ Investors in People	Yes	
▪ OFT Excellence award		
▪ Beacon Status – topic		
▪ CLS Quality Mark	Yes	
▪ ISO 9000		Yes
Do you use the EFQM model? (yes/no)	Yes	
Do you have a service level agreement with the OFT?	No. Working towards	

APPENDIX C – LOCAL AUTHORITY ORGANISATION – BUDGETS

DESCRIPTION	£ 2006/7 Spend	£ 2007/8 Budget
Employee Costs	508	553
Supplies & Services	69	67
Gross Costs		
	576	620

APPENDIX D – STAFFING ALLOCATION

Role	Description	Number of Staff
Managerial	Staff primarily concerned with the management of staff within TS. Include only the proportion of time spent on such duties	1.0
Administration	Staff that support the service within the office	1.0
Enforcement Staff	TSOs, CPOs, FTOs authorised under criminal legislation	12.0
Enforcement Support Staff	e.g. lab staff, technical assistants	1.0
Consumer Advice	Full time staff & proportion of time other staff spend on such duties	0
DTS Trainees		3.0
Total No. of Staff	Exclude vacant posts	14.0
Current Vacancies	All roles	2.0
Long term Vacancies	More than 4 months duration	2.0

Qualification	Description	Number of Staff
DTS	Diploma in TS or equivalent	5
DCA	Diploma in Consumer Affairs or Equivalent DCATS	3
DCA Food	Full DCA incl. Food qualification	1
DCA An. Health	Full DCA incl. Animal Health qualification	1
DMS & similar	Diploma in Management Studies, MBA & similar	2
Others:		
	DCA – Petroleum Certificate	1
	DCA – Food and Agriculture Certificate	0
	BA Consumer Protection	0

APPENDIX E – BUSINESS PROFILE

	Description	Number
Business registered for business rates		5438
Home Authority companies: Formal agreements	Follow LACORS Home Authority Principle guidance.	0
Home Authority companies: Informal recognition		22
Enquiries received concerning Home Authority companies		150
Risk Assessment: Assessment of risk of a business poses to consumers & competitors to determine frequency of inspection visits & appropriate enforcement.		
High	Follow LACORS guidance on premises risk assessment.	28
Medium		1611
Low		2794
No inspectable risk		

Other Business Data

	Description	Number
Business Start Ups	Use figures based on VAT registrations.	TBC
Business Failures		TBC