

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 15<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2004**

#### **FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY FUNDING FOR PROMOTION OF FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

##### **Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise the Committee that the Food Standards Agency has made available the sum of up to £40,424 in both this financial year and next, for the funding of a project to promote the introduction of Food Safety Management Systems within catering businesses.
- 1.2 To request that the Committee approve the creation of a temporary post of Project Worker, funded by the Food Standards Agency, to take the project forward.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 New EU Food Hygiene Regulations to be introduced in January 2006 will require food businesses to put into place Food Safety Management Procedures and to assist, the Food Standards Agency are making funding available to local authorities specifically for this purpose.

### **3. DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 In recognising that small local businesses (particularly in catering) will find this difficult, this project has been designed in an effort to aid and assist catering businesses as much as possible, so that they will be in compliance with the new legislation as soon as it comes into effect.
- 3.2 There are approximately 600 catering businesses to be assisted and this cannot be managed within the confines of the existing establishment. It is proposed therefore to employ a suitable person for a fixed term of 18 months (with a possible extension of up to a further 6 months) to take the project forward.
- 3.3 The Project Worker will assist existing members of the Food Team within the Environmental Health Section of the department to ensure the specified outcomes are met. Delivery of the project is not possible by existing staff.

- 3.4 It is proposed to enter into a partnership agreement with local Colleges of Education whereby suitable courses would be developed and run for the benefit of employees in the catering trade. The Council would finance these courses from the allocation of funds from the Food Standards Agency and therefore they would be provided at no cost to the trade.
- 3.5 East Ayrshire Council has been invited to apply for funds, up to the above ceiling, to wholly finance the project and the bid was submitted prior to 1 September.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 All costs incurred in the participation in this project are recoverable from the Food Standards Agency.

#### **5. LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Although not yet a legal requirement, the purpose of this project is to ensure that all catering businesses will be offered assistance in developing systems which will ensure compliance with proposed legislation.

#### **6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The implementation of this scheme is in accord with existing policies.

#### **7. CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 This is an excellent opportunity to help and assist those people operating catering businesses within East Ayrshire to develop their businesses within proposed changes to food safety legislation at little or no cost to themselves. It should result in marked improvement in food safety within all sorts of catering premises so further protecting the general public by reducing the likelihood of food poisoning incidents occurring.

#### **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Committee are recommended to:-
- (i) Note the initiative by the Food Standards Agency and the proposed funding levels;
  - (ii) Approve the appointment of a temporary Project Worker and refer the matter to the Corporate Governance Committee in respect of their interest; and

(iii) otherwise note the contents of the report

William Stafford  
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/PLT/GRM

16<sup>th</sup> August 2004

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Letter from Food Standards Agency of 6 July
2. Guidance for Local Authorities to support the FSAS Funding Strategy

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone 01563 554021 and ask to speak to Paul Todd.

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