

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE - 5th FEBRUARY 2003

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK FOR TRADING STANDARDS

Report by Director of Community Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek committee approval of a Service Delivery Plan 2002/2003 (the Plan) prepared in response to the National Performance Framework for Trading Standards (the Framework) by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The National Performance Framework for Trading Standards Services has been developed by the Consumer Affairs Directorate of the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI), with input from the Local Authority Co-ordinating body on Regulatory Services (LACORS), the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), the National Weights & Measures Laboratory (NWML) and the Trading Standards Institute (TSI).

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The Framework came into effect on 1st April 2002 with the intention of ensuring that trading standards services throughout the UK are able to develop a modern service working towards national and local priorities in a coherent way.
- 3.2 The Framework requires authorities to prepare an annual Service Delivery Plan setting out service provisions for identified standards. The Framework prescribes the format and style of the Plan, which the DTI intend to review through a process of peer review.
- 3.3 In conjunction with the Plan, an Information Return, linked to some of the priorities identified in the Plan, is required to be produced on an annual basis. The returns required by this package will replace the data currently submitted to the Secretary of State under section 70 of the Weights and Measures Act 1985. The first returns affected by this change will be for the period April 2002 – March 2003.
- 3.4 In developing the framework, it is recognised that Local Government, as a whole, is currently facing a period of immense change. Modern authorities are expected to take a leading role in community planning, facilitating local well-being and in speaking for their communities, and this process continues to evolve. This framework therefore aims to be

flexible enough to encompass changes in policy stemming from these developments.

3.5 The key impetus for developing a performance framework for Trading Standards is to improve the service provided to consumers and business as part of the Government's productivity agenda. The National Performance Framework 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
- ◆ facilitate a more coherent and consistent approach to enforcement and service delivery.

3.6 The National Performance Framework has three key elements: the Service Delivery Plan, the Standard and the Information Return.

3.7 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 the expectations of the community. It aims to allow authorities to set the scene and consider the circumstances in which they are operating as a prelude to formulating plans for the year ahead. Part Two sets out priorities for the service in the year ahead and requires services to at least make provisions in respect of each of the standards. Part Three requires services to have in place arrangements for reviewing progress in delivering the plan. The Service Delivery Plan will be the basis on which local authorities will be monitored and audited nationally on their provision of a Trading Standards Service.

3.8 Member Approval:
The Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan must be submitted to the relevant member forum for approval.

3.9 The priorities for the service to work towards 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. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Nil

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Nil

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 East Ayrshire Trading Standards Service has prepared a Service Delivery Plan as part of the National Performance Framework for Trading Standards Services which has been developed by the DTI in conjunction with LACORS, OFT, NWML and TSI.

7.2 A copy of the National Performance Framework and the East Ayrshire Service Delivery Plan is available for perusal in the Members Library.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) agree the contents of the Service Delivery Plan; and
- (ii) approve the submission of the plan to the DTI

William Stafford
Director of Community Services

WS/JD/JM

7th January 2003

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. East Ayrshire Council Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan

Any person wishing to inspect the background paper above should telephone 01563 576111 and speak to John Crawford, Head of Protective Services.

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