

# COMMITTED TO QUALITY – THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE APPROACH TO BEST VALUE

## Service Plans 2001-2002

Name of Service Plan Area: Trading Standards Service Plan Ref: ES18

### Part 1 Description of service

#### Purpose of service

The purpose of Buckinghamshire Trading Standards is to encourage a fair, honest and safe trading environment for the consumers and businesses of Buckinghamshire.

#### What are the statutory parameters that regulate how the service operates?

The Service is mandatory. The Division is involved with over 60 separate Acts of Parliament and for the great majority of those the County Council is under a statutory duty to enforce the legislation. No legal minimum service level is specified, although there are some central government recommendations.

#### Chairman of Policy & Resources 2001/02 Policy Steer(s) relevant to the service

Overall steers – Council must live within its means, all managers must deliver 2% efficiencies

Resource summary	2001-02
Budget £m	£1,095,689

#### Volume of service (2001/2)

- Potential users of Trading Standards' services include all those resident in the County, together with others who have purchased goods or services in Buckinghamshire.
- All traders (including farmers) are subject to visits and enquiries, and may obtain advice.
- We support the nationally recognised Home Authority principle and give priority to ensuring that manufacturers, packers, importers and head offices of major trading organisations within the County market satisfactory goods and services.
- Other users of the Service include other enforcement agencies, professional organisations, trade bodies, Citizens Advice Bureaux and voluntary groups.

### Part 2 Performance of Service

Current performance (in relation to 2000-01 Service Plan outcomes and targets)		
Outcome	Target for 2000/1	Performance achieved
The elimination of direct sales of age restricted goods to young people.	90% refusals of attempted purchases in targeted areas	Expansion of proof of age scheme to all areas of County. 94% refusals to young people in total.
More people have access to information and advice when they need it.	Increase amount of advice and information given by 5%.	We dealt with 5% more consumer complaints and dealt with 7% other requests for information than last year. This does not include information provided in relation to the large number of enquiries on the foot and mouth restrictions.

Major businesses in Buckinghamshire (Home Authority) are fully aware of their responsibilities.	Contact to be made with all businesses based on a risk assessment scheme	All targeted businesses were visited
Buckinghamshire has a fair, honest and safe trading environment for the community.	To conduct inspections and product testing at trading premises based on a risk assessment scheme	Targets met for high and medium and low risk food premises. 80% of target met for non - food premises. (Resources diverted to Foot and Mouth outbreak).

THREE YEAR OUTCOME	MEASURE OR INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE 2000/1	TARGET 2001/2	TARGET 2004/5
1. To conduct risk based inspection and sampling programmes at trading premises in order to establish the compliance of goods and services. <b>7(e)</b>	The proportion of high, medium and low risk premises due for inspection that were inspected.	100% of planned food premises. 80% of planned non-food premises.	All premises due based on their risk assessment.	All premises due based on their risk assessment.
2. In response to requests from consumers and business, to promptly provide sufficient information and advice on legal rights and responsibilities. To educate and promote awareness of the service Trading Standards provides to the community. <b>7(e)</b>	(a) Response times for requests. (i) written requests within 5 working days (ii) telephone requests within 1 day. (b) Compliance with targeted education/ awareness programme. (c) The quality of advice provided.	n/a	95%  To complete programme  To obtain the CLS Qualitymark for advice	97%  To complete programme.  To maintain the Qualitymark.
3. To promote fair trading and consumer confidence by investigating and taking the necessary action to address those breaches of Trading Standards legislation which are of the greatest concern to the community. <b>7(e)</b>	The implementation of policies dealing with complaints concerning third parties. The number of persistent offenders/trade areas targeted.	n/a	3 highest persistent offenders/trade areas	5 highest persistent offenders/trade areas
4. To provide food safety within the community by conducting inspections and sampling in	The proportion of high, medium and low risk food premises due for inspection that were inspected.	100%	All premises due based on their risk assessment.	All premises due based on their risk assessment.

THREE YEAR OUTCOME	MEASURE OR INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE 2000/1	TARGET 2001/2	TARGET 2004/5
accordance with the County's first Food Safety Enforcement Plan. <b>7(e)</b>	The number of food and animal feeding stuff sampling audits carried out.	8	8	8
5. To maintain and reinforce the provision of a county wide 'proof of age card' scheme to eliminate direct sales of age restricted goods to young people. <b>7(a)</b>	Proportion of refusals of sales to young people in Buckinghamshire.	94%	96%	98%

**Portfolio Flagship Projects:**

Project Outcome	Key Stages	By When
<p>Leading:</p> <p><b>Community 10</b> Consumer confidence is improved as a result of the promotional activities by Trading Standards. <b>7(e)</b></p> <p>Contributing to:</p> <p>-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a project to pilot a Fair Trader Recognition Scheme.</li> <li>• Complete a funding bid to the DTI for a 'doorstop selling initiative' to protect vulnerable consumers in the county from unscrupulous and dishonest doorstop sellers.</li> <li>• Make a submission to achieve a Community Legal Services Charter Mark.</li> <li>• Introduce an initiative to test standards of repair and maintenance of motor cars.</li> <li>• Proof of age card project consolidated and monitored.</li> </ul>	<p>September 2001</p> <p>May 2001</p> <p>April 2001</p> <p>November 2001</p>

**Part 3 For more information**

**Associated County Council Business Plans, and links with other Service Plans or Statutory Plans**

The Trading Standards Business Plan and Food Safety Enforcement Plan describe a full summary of planned activities and their level of delivery.

**When is the service due for a Best Value Root and Branch Review?**

Report of best value review submitted to Cabinet on 19/02/01.

**Accountable Officer : Keith Edlington**