

G REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

Trading Standards

- 1 There is an increasing daily demand for licences to move animals. These are only issued by officers authorised under the Animal Health Act 1981. This task has been met by the two officers who are dedicated to animal health and welfare work. This has seriously reduced their opportunity to conduct routine animal health inspections and an examination of records.
- 2 An initial survey was carried out in June of this year to test the performance of car servicing outlets within the County. This was part of a Community Services flagship project to improve consumer confidence in the marketplace. Of the 8 servicing outlets 5 were found not to have conducted the service adequately as described and/or made claims for further work that could not be completely substantiated. Follow up action is taking place with the traders concerned to address these issues. Further surveys will be carried out at a later date in order to provide a bigger picture of the standards provided in Buckinghamshire.
- 3 The Food Standards Agency Audit team will be with us for 3 to 4 days starting 1 October examining the records of our food enforcement work. The audit is partly concerned with checking the evidence we keep to prepare the statistics we are required to provide to the Agency with on a quarterly basis. A check will also be made on the progress we are making against the Food Enforcement Plan that we were required to produce and submit to the Agency earlier in the year.

Libraries and Heritage

- 4 Building work commenced on the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies in July. The Centre is a Libraries and Heritage flagship project aiming to increase access to the history of Buckinghamshire. The work is on target.

- 5 The flagship project aimed at addressing the needs of specific library customers through the one-off allocation of £200,000 to the book fund is having an immediate effect. For the first time in four years declining book issues have levelled off and in July actually rose.
- 6 The Museum is currently undergoing Phase 2 registration with Resource: the Council for Museums Archives and Libraries. As part of the registration process the Museum has to demonstrate that it has an acquisitions and disposal policy that has been approved by the Council.

Waste

- 7 The draft waste disposal plan has been distributed for consultation, to Cabinet members, District Councils, Forum members, the Special Interest Group, as well as adjoining authorities and appropriate staff. The consultation period runs to the end of October.

Countryside Services

- 8 The Landscape Plan for Buckinghamshire Part 1 has now been completed and is being distributed to relevant organisations through August and September. The next stage is establishment of a working group, chiefly involving district councils and other key groups, to develop the Part 2, the action plan relevant to the needs and resources available to implement initiatives to forward the aims of the Plan. Aiming for the first meeting of this group in October 2001.
- 9 Buckinghamshire Woodland Forum Annual Conference has been organised for 15 September on the theme of Biodiversity. Countryside Services are instrumental in organising this county-wide conference on behalf of the Forum.
- 10 Work is going on with Bucks Community Action to update the Rural Strategy. The final document should be produced by Spring 2002.

Youth and Community

- 11 There will be a major public launch on 9 October of the ConneXions Service in Buckinghamshire. The local development co-ordinator and an engaging young people worker have been appointed. We have also established a young peoples recruitment panel and the Personal advisor training is underway. OFSTED will be inspecting our ConneXions service in October 2001, which is very early in its existence
- 12 Our three representatives on the UK Parliament/Youth Council have undertaken a survey of 1000, 13-19 year olds in Buckinghamshire during the summer. The questions were based around topics that are of interest to that age group and the results (due in mid October) will be used by our 3 youth MPs in their work in the Youth Parliament.
- 13 Our Youth and Community Service has been cited by the Local Government Association, as one of the best examples in England of the "Hear by Right" for youth council work.

**MARGARET DEWAR
CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES**