

***ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
AND CONSUMER
PROTECTION
DEPARTMENT***

***DRAFT*
*SERVICE PLAN***

April 2003 to March 2006

INTRODUCTION

To meet Halton's most pressing needs, the Borough Council has identified 5 key priorities:

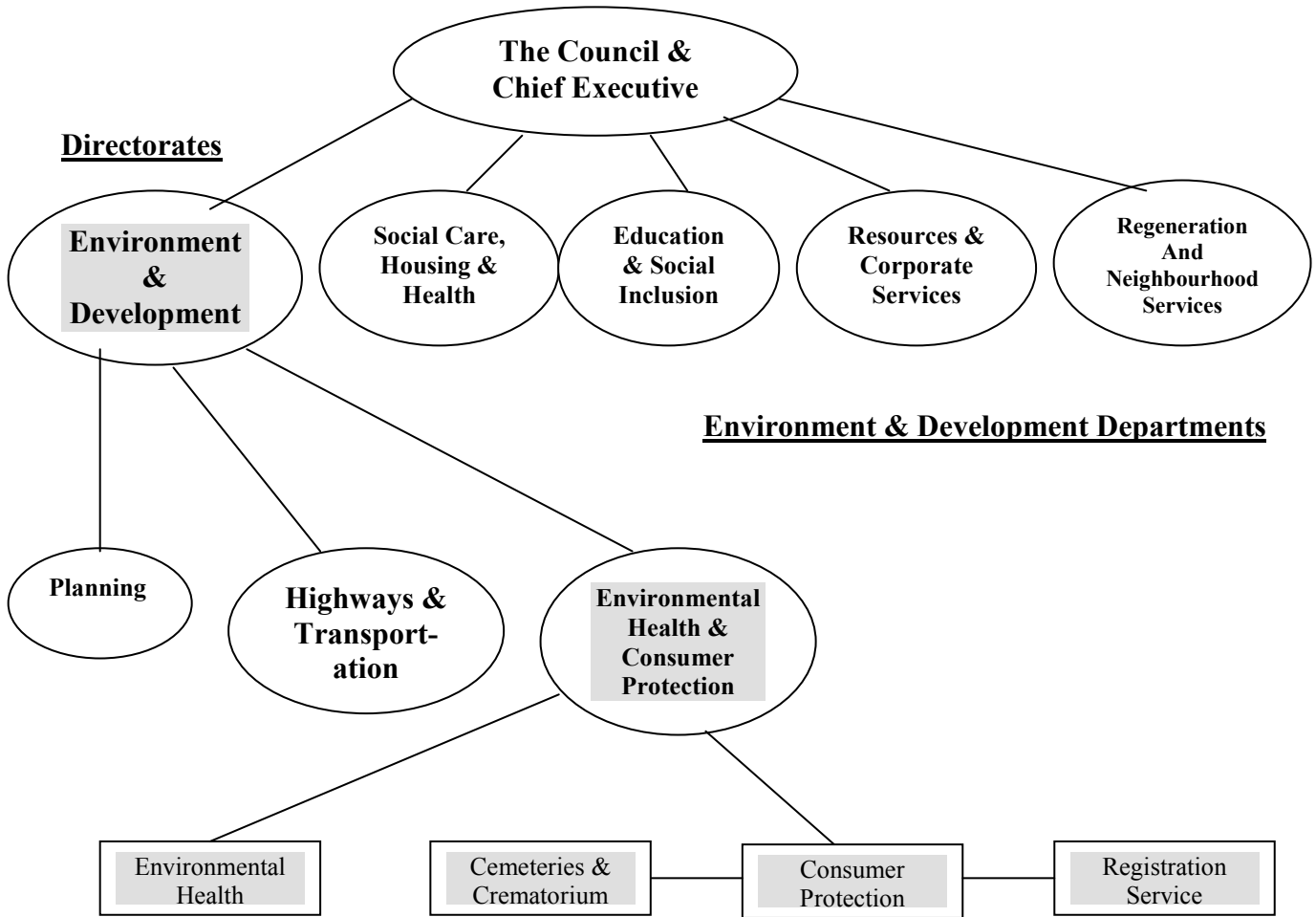
- Improving **health standards**
- Promoting **urban renewal**
- Enhancing **life chances and employment**
- Tackling **poverty and deprivation**
- Ensuring **safe and attractive neighbourhoods**

Through their work, each of the 21 departments of the Council contributes to these aims and to providing other essential services.

This Service Plan sets out the main things that the Environmental Health and Consumer Protection Department does and the targets it will be aiming to achieve by the end of March 2006.

It is designed to enable the public, Councillors and managers to monitor how well this part of the Council is doing and to keep it on track in improving the quality of life for people in the Borough.

WHERE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND CONSUMER PROTECTION FITS IN



Environmental Health and Consumer Protection Divisions

ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

What is it for?

The Department exists to provide services that protect the living, working and leisure environment; proactively protect public health; ensure fair and equitable business and trading practices; meet the requirements of the bereaved in relation to burial and cremation and facilitate the registration of births, marriages and deaths.

What does it do?

The Department is responsible for:

- Environmental Health** -
 - Food Safety & Standards Enforcement and Advice
 - Health & Safety Enforcement and Advice
 - Health Promotion & Community Safety Service
 - Environmental and public health protection
 - Pollution control and air quality management
 - Animal health and welfare control
 - Pest Control and dog warden Service

- Consumer Protection** -
 - Trading Standards Enforcement and Advice
 - Consumer Advice Service
 - Petroleum and Explosives Storage Enforcement and Advice
 - Cemeteries and Crematorium
 - Registration Service

Key Facts about Environmental Health and Consumer Protection

Who benefits from the service?

The service benefits everyone in Halton - those who breathe air, who eat food, who work in offices and shops, who buy goods and services, conduct business, who lose loved ones, who wish to register births, marriages and deaths.

How much does it cost?

How much does it cost?

The total cost of the service is £2,432,000 being the net cost before income from recharges.

- *Net spending (Revenue Budget) 2003/4 (A) :* £2,241,000
- *Total income (e.g. Fees and Charges) 2003/4 (B) :* £ 771,000
- *Recharge Income 2003/4 (C)* £ 191,000
- *Gross spending (revenue budget) 2003/4 (A + B + C) :* £3,203,000

NB these figures will change as the budget is worked up for 2003/4

How many people work in the Department?

Numbers of staff on Establishment	2003-04:	50.18 (Full Time Equivalents)
	2002-03:	50.89 (Full Time Equivalents)

Key service statistics

Number of Premises in the Borough subject to food legislation enforcement	950
Number of premises in the Borough subject to health & safety legislation enforcement	1700
Number of food safety service requests per annum	350
Communicable disease investigations per annum	195
Number of health & safety service requests per annum	150
Number of accidents reported to The Health & Safety Team	130
Number of pest control requests per annum	3000
Number of environmental protection service requests per annum	6500
Number of Environmental Protection authorised processes	61
Number of internal and external consultations responded to per annum	350
Number of animal health and welfare establishments for regulation	50
Businesses regulated by Trading Standards	3000
No. of businesses advised directly by Trading Standards in 2002	437
No. of premises licensed/registered with Trading Standards	134
Consumer complaints and service requests per annum	2900
Total number of cremations and burials in 2002	1171
Total number of marriages conducted /attended in 2002	301
No. of C of E and Non-Conformist weddings in 2002	205
No. of premises registered for civil marriages in Halton	6
Percentage rate of increase of marriages in approved premises per annum 2002	13.6%
No of deaths registered in 2002	1011
No. of births registered in 2002	18
No. of birth declarations completed for neighbouring district	1106

WHERE ARE WE HEADING? OBJECTIVES FOR THE SERVICE

Building a Better Future the Councils corporate plan for 2001/2002 to 2005/2006 sets down five key priorities:

1. Improving health standards
2. Promoting urban renewal
3. Enhancing life chances and employment
4. Tackling poverty and deprivation
5. Ensuring safe and attractive neighbourhoods.

While Environmental Health and Consumer Protection plays a major preventative role in achieving the Council's strategic priorities relating to health and poverty and deprivation, valid contributions are made to achieving all other priorities.

Numerous preventative health measures form the backbone of what Environmental Health exists for. Consumer Protection is continuing to promote initiatives to reduce young people's access to addictive or dangerous products (alcohol, cigarettes, solvents, lottery tickets, fireworks, knives etc.), and thereby help promote better health, life chances and employment and safer and therefore more attractive neighbourhoods.

Within each priority area key objectives are listed some of which are referred to throughout this document.

Priority 1

IMPROVING HEALTH STANDARDS

Relevant key objectives referred to:

1B -To lay firm foundations for healthy start in life for the youngest people in our community.

1C -To promote a healthier living environment and lifestyles that sustain individual good health and well-being and help prevent illness

1E -To safeguard the health of the public

Corporate Plan key objective reference

Departmental Objective

1B	To assist traders in their efforts to avoid supplying certain products to children, via the continued promotion of an 'Age Check' scheme in the Borough.
1C	To educate the public on consumer safety issues via the media and public displays such as the Halton Show.
1C	To work in partnership with the Local Community, Halton PCT and other departments of Halton Borough Council to promote personal and community health, safety and well-being through special projects and active campaigns.
1C	To actively promote and provide information about positive health and lifestyle choices to all residents of Halton Borough Council.
1E	To ensure food produced, prepared and sold in Halton is safe and wholesome by carrying out planned inspection programmes, investigating and responding to food safety service requests and offering advice to businesses and residents of Halton Borough Council.
1E	To ensure the health, safety and welfare of all persons in the workplace by carrying out planned inspection programmes, investigating and responding to health & safety service requests and offering advice to businesses and residents of

Halton Borough Council.

- 1E To actively participate and promote locally the national campaigns run by both the Food Standards Agency and the Health and Safety Executive in pursuance of declared national performance targets to 2010.
- 1E To actively participate with the Primary Care Trust in the investigation and control of communicable disease
- 1E To ensure that this and future generations are protected from pollution and its consequences through monitoring and pursuing health related standards through regulation, consultation and active participation in improvement strategies.
- 1E To continue to promote the Validate proof-of-age card for young people in the Borough to help reduce the supply of cigarettes/alcohol etc., to children by legitimate businesses.
- 1E To continually assess and appropriately deal with sellers of age restricted products (which often have major health or safety implications for young people) by undertaking undercover test-purchasing exercises in the marketplace.
- 1E To ensure that health claims borne by products marketed in Halton are not misleading.
- 1E To be a major player in emergency planning and to be represented on the Health Advisory Group for chemical Incidents.
- 1E To ensure that consumer goods supplied in Halton or manufactured/originating in the Borough are safe.
- 1E To minimise the potential of serious public danger through pro-active enforcement of legislation controlling petroleum, explosives and poisons storage, licensing and registration.

Priority 2

PROMOTING URBAN RENEWAL

Relevant key objectives referred to:

2B- To promote the sustainable development and regeneration of the Halton economy

2H -To reclaim and make most productive use of derelict and contaminated land in the Borough.

Corporate Plan key objective reference

Departmental Objective

- 2B To provide advice and guidance on issues relating to the role and activities of the Department to new and existing businesses that contribute to the Halton economy.
- 2B To regulate and enforce in a manner that contributes to a successful Halton economy and not a hindrance to it, assisting local businesses to trade competitively on a fair and equitable playing field.
- 2B Maximise the take-up of the Trusted Trader registration scheme through effective marketing, and publicise the scheme in order to promote reputable, local traders thereby contributing to the sustainable development of the Halton economy.
- 2B To improve e-business compliance in Halton (thereby protecting e-consumers) and support Halton businesses to expand into e-business, and contribute to the sustainable development of the Halton economy.
- 2H To monitor and regulate the environmental performance of industry which may have impact on the regeneration of land packages.
- 2H To develop improved information exchange on contaminated land issues to facilitate the marketing and development of brownfield sites

Priority 3

ENHANCING LIFE CHANCES AND EMPLOYMENT

Relevant key objectives referred to:

3A- To ensure that residents of all ages have access to suitable education, training and means for personal development

3E- To improve opportunities for the personal development of young people, particularly those who are disenfranchised, disaffected or hard to reach

3F -To improve educational and skills levels of the 16+ population to enable them to take advantage of local job & other life opportunities.

Corporate Departmental Objective

Plan key objective reference

3A	To encourage formal and informal training in all areas of food and health & safety through advice and inspection of businesses that will further improve future employment opportunities
3E	To educate young people on their consumer rights thus creating better-informed consumers of tomorrow, e.g. via the Young Consumers Competition, direct educational programme development for schools and the Ask Cedric website.
3F	To provide information and raise the profile of food and health & safety and environmental issues that empowers the individual and Community to make enhanced life choices and improve their employment prospects.
3F	To work with and increase knowledge about food and health & safety in a range of age groups: school children, older people, young people by leading or working in partnership within special projects.
3F	To provide information and education to the Halton community via both one to one and collective methods, allowing people to make informed choices in the marketplace and to understand their legal rights.

Priority 4

TACKLING POVERTY AND DEPRIVATION

Relevant key objectives referred to:

4B -To promote a social environment where people feel motivated and able to participate fully and constructively in the life of the local community and do not feel excluded

4C- To support the efforts of residents to harness local energy and skills and to help themselves in building confident and successful communities

4D -To include and enhance the quality of life of those who are genuinely less able to help themselves

Corporate Departmental objective

Plan key objective reference

4B	To improve health and enhance life chances through food safety and standards and occupational health & safety enforcement.
4C	To contribute to joint initiatives such as the Halton Food Partnership, the Healthy Living Centre and Food For Health projects in order to reduce health inequalities by working within communities.

- 4D To both legally and practically advise and contribute to the continued success of all local businesses, large and small, to improve employment prospects and enhance the quality of life within the borough.
- 4D To seek out and address any inequalities in the Department's service delivery
- 4D To design and deliver initiatives aimed specifically at helping those who are less able to help themselves, in order to help tackle poverty, disadvantage and exclusion. (E.g. policing the supply of consumer credit, so that loan sharking and misleading advertising is eliminated).
- 4D To identify measures that will benefit the most disadvantaged and ensure that addressing inequality remains an integral part of policy development.
- 4D To enforce legislation in order to create a fair and just trading environment and enhance the quality of life in Halton e.g. Misleading Prices, Consumer Credit and Stop-Now Orders.
- 4D To increase service take-up by hard to reach groups and by communities in the more disadvantaged areas of Halton.

Priority 5

ENSURING SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS

Relevant key objectives referred to:

5A To investigate and tackle the underlying causes of crime

5B To address the public's three top priorities for community safety

5D To reduce incidents of youth related crime and disorder and provide opportunities for young people to become responsible citizens

5E To reduce incidents of domestic violence and improve the understanding of and response to the problem in Halton

5F To create and sustain a safer living environment in Halton and reduce the fear of crime

5G To ensure progressive and sustainable environmental improvements in all areas of the Borough reflecting the priorities of the public

5I To promote an integrated transport system that balances the need for people and goods to move around, with reducing traffic and adverse impact on local neighbourhoods and the environment

5J To safeguard and improve air quality in Halton.

**Corporate
Plan key
objective
reference**

Departmental Objective

- 5A To help reduce crime within the Borough by identifying, investigating and where necessary prosecuting non-compliant and / or rogue businesses.
- 5A To work with other agencies to help develop initiatives that will address the underlying causes of crime, for example, working with the Health Authority and the Police to reduce access to and use of drugs (solvents) and alcohol.

Corporate Plan key objective reference	Departmental Objective
5B	To minimise the potential danger that may be posed by unsafe headstones to cemetery visitors by maintaining and implementing a robust risk management strategy for safe headstones
5B	To eliminate or significantly reduce incidents of distraction burglary in the Borough via our contribution to, and implementation of the Trading Standards North West strategy on distraction burglary and bogus callers, and via partnership working with local agencies.
5D	To eliminate or reduce the distress caused to residents by incidents of youth nuisance and / or crime associated with the underage purchase and consumption of alcohol, fireworks etc.
5F	To ensure the safe storage of explosives and petroleum within the Borough.
5F	To prevent the supply of unsafe products, both proactively and reactively.
5G	To ensure safe and acceptable environments for food safety, food standards and occupational health & safety through enforcement.
5G	To continue to lead on Community projects forging vital partnerships with other departments within the Authority, Charities, Public bodies such as the Police, the Prince's Trust and the Health Service to promote safety and environmental initiatives throughout the Borough in new and innovative ways.
5J	To continue to carry out a review and assessments of air quality in accordance with current statutory guidance and regulations to consider present and likely future air quality and continue to work towards meeting the air quality objective.
5J	To work closely with all Agencies involved in the regulation of air pollution to ensure continuing compliance and wherever practicable improvement in environmental performance of those being regulated.

OTHER MAJOR OBJECTIVES

In addition the service has a duty:

To deliver a food safety and standards service that fulfils the Standard set by the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) Framework Agreement on food law enforcement. The Food service is committed to achieving the performance targets it has set out for premises inspections and other standards for our service delivery (see section 6). The Food Service is also committed to contributing at a local level, to any national campaigns, targets and initiatives implemented by the FSA.

To deliver a health & safety service that fulfils the mandatory standards set by Section 18 of the Health & Safety at Work Act and by guidance from the Health and Safety Commission (HSC). The Health & Safety service is committed to achieving the performance targets set in the Service plan and to other standards for our service delivery. The Health & safety Service is committed to contributing at a local level any national campaign, targets and initiatives implemented by the HSC.

To meet the requirements of Part IV of The Environment Act 1995 by carrying out a review and assessment of air quality in accordance with current statutory guidance and regulations to consider present and likely future air quality, and assess whether the objectives are likely to be achieved in time. Also to continue to work towards meeting the air quality objectives beyond the deadlines set out in the 2000 and 2002 Regulations.

To produce and maintain and implement a written strategy for the inspection of contaminated land that sets out its approach to the identification and remediation of contaminated land to meet the requirement of Chapter B of the statutory guidance issued under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Provide a cohesive and unified approach to all relevant Environmental Health and Consumer Protection issues and to strive to ensure significant improvements in these areas.

To assist businesses to comply with trading standards legislation aimed at packaging minimisation.

To co-operate with other relevant bodies to secure lasting improvements.

To promote a high standard of awareness of relevant issues amongst the public.

To provide an efficient and effective Cemeteries and Crematorium Service within the Borough focussed on the needs of the Halton Community.

To continue to develop and improve the choices and flexibility provided by the Register Office, for example by the provision of naming ceremonies and ceremonies for the affirmation of marriage vows.

To fulfil the Council's statutory duties in relation to birth, marriage and death registration and to provide for the correct and lawful conduct of civil marriages in the Borough.

To respond to the issues raised in the 2002 White Paper "Civil Registration: Vital Change". This will lead to full use of modern technology dispensing with certificates of birth, death and marriage and the introduction of a central database for verifications of identity. The registration service will have more flexibility to be innovative in order to meet the needs of the local communities.

FACTORS AFFECTING THE SERVICE

THE SERVICE CONTEXT

Environmental Health

Health Safety and Welfare at Work -

- The Health and Safety Executive [HSE] has launched a major national campaign *Revitalising Health & Safety* that proposes, amongst other changes, a new focus on Local Authorities' contribution to occupational health and full engagement of stakeholders including small firms. Key targets include: reducing the number of working days lost per 100,000 workers from work related injury and ill health by 30% by 2010; reducing the incident rate of fatal and major injury accidents by 10% by 2010; reducing the incident rate of cases of work related ill health by 20% by 2010. Half of these improvements should be achieved by 2004.
- This campaign has shifted the focus from traditional risk based inspections to topic areas such as for example *slips, trips and falls* or *work-place transport*. There will be an emphasis on a range of innovative promotional activities.
- There are currently reviews in place of work activities that will be transferred from HSE to Local Authority enforcement under the *Enforcing Regulations 1998*. Such activities proposed include gas safety, motor vehicle repair, and nursing homes and work related road traffic accidents. There are no plans to provide extra funding to cover these additional duties.

- The HSE has produced the *Enforcement Management Model* (EMM), a framework for enforcement activities that will have major impact on future investigation procedures and recording.
- We are now required to produce an annual comprehensive Health and Safety at Work Safety Inspection plan. The HSE is carrying out full audits of the Health & Safety Service provided by Local Authorities.

Pollution Control -

Under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1990 and the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations 2000, local authorities were newly given responsibility for integrated pollution control over certain categories of industrial installation. This is known as Local Authority Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (LA-IPPC), and the installations and activities are often referred to as Part A2. The existing Local Air Pollution Control regime also transfers into the Local Air Pollution Prevention and Control (LAPPC) system (Part B) under the new legislation. Present part B processes if not being upgraded to part A2 will nevertheless need to be reassessed and issued with permits to reflect the new regime. From April next year we will start to receive applications.

Theoretically this will replace the resource dedicated to the existing system and will be resource neutral. However with the additional complexity of the new regime a major challenge next year will be training and building new expertise. One major effect of the new regime is the increasing volume of consultations from the environment agency as they process their own applications.

Air Quality -

The government has reviewed the National Air Quality Strategy and the standards within it and will be demanding a fresh round of review and assessment of air quality by local authorities in 2003. This should not be as extensive as the previous ones but is anticipated to take up to 6 months. It is also the intention to oblige local authorities to complete annual reviews and report to DEFRA each year thereafter.

Contaminated Land -

Implementing the contaminated land strategy has proved to be as anticipated a major area of work for environmental health. The Council have a duty to identify land which may be presenting a risk through an identifiable pollutant pathway to receptors such as local inhabitants, drinking water supplies, buildings, ecosystems. Having identified such land they have a duty to carry out detailed inspection and determine the land as contaminated as defined in the Act. To date the initial stages of the inspection strategy has identified some 900 hectares of land that have had a potentially contaminative land use. Of this, approximately 400 hectares are likely to be key sites that will require serious consideration and investigation. Within this area there are both in-use and derelict sites, some of which have had varying degrees of investigation and remediation already whereas with other sites very little is known. There is a suggestion that national performance indicators will be introduced to ensure that local authorities continue to undertake this duty and allow the government to effectively measure progress.

Food Safety -

- The Food Standards Agency has set a number of national targets that include: reducing foodborne illness by 20% by 2006; promoting honest and informative labelling; helping people to eat more healthily.

- The European Union has produced draft regulations for all businesses (excluding primary producers) to have fully documented Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems in place and for all food personnel to be trained in HACCP. Under current regulations, documentation of systems and personnel training is not mandatory. This will have a major impact on the Food Service. Small and medium enterprises will find this requirement particularly onerous and will require significant individual officer attention. The FSA are aware of the need for additional funding but have recently been unsuccessful in a bid for funding from the Treasury.
- We are now required to produce an annual comprehensive Food safety and standards inspection plan. The Food Standards Agency will continue to carry out audits of Food Authorities.

The New Health Agenda -

The FSA, The LGA (Local Government Association) and LACORS (Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services) have made a commitment to improving partnerships and working in innovating ways to promote access to safe & nutritious food and improve community health and well-being. (ref. *Food: The Local Vision*) The Health Development Agency has confirmed the central role of local Government, particularly Environmental Health (ref: *Environmental Health 2012 A Key Partner in Delivering the Public Health Agenda*) as the key partner in delivering the Public Health Agenda for the 21st century. The Food and Health & Safety Unit must continue to consolidate their vital role in local partnerships, in Health Authority Primary Care Trusts and Community Health Projects.

Consumer Protection

Central Government Initiatives - The Division is subject to a growing proliferation of Central Government initiatives aimed at protecting consumers and honest businesses. For example, the recent changes to legislation introducing new powers to work with children to attempt to test-purchase alcohol, will increase demands on resources. The development of further Consumer focused policy by Central Government is likely.

National Performance Framework for Trading Standards Services - local Trading Standards authorities are required to produce an annual, broad and comprehensive “Community Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan”. Members must be kept apprised of progress against the plan, which is required to balance local and national priorities, and which must address the authority’s consumer and trader advice, information and education programmes.

New Powers and Responsibilities - the ‘Modern Markets, Confident Consumers’ White Paper has, and will continue to lead to new powers, responsibilities, duties and areas of work for Consumer Protection Services. The Service is now able to use “Stop Now Orders”, involving the use of civil injunctions to deal with rogue traders. New and improved consumer legislation such as this will impact on the resources of the Division.

Improved Service Access - access to the service has been improved via the provision of up-to-date, around-the-clock, on-line information for both consumers and traders. However, maintaining this facility is continuing to place increasing resource demands upon the Service.

Resourcing Key Priority Initiatives - the Division has committed itself to a number of initiatives that will directly improve the quality of health and life within the Borough. For example, the rolling forward of the Validate proof of age card scheme and researching the viability of launching

a Trusted Trader scheme will both require considerable and continued resource input in order to succeed.

Partnership Working – greater efficiencies will result from improved partnership working (within the North West Region in particular) following the appointment of a North West Regional Co-ordinator (of Trading Standards), funded by the DTI.

Closer Collaboration – Best Value has seen greater collaboration between neighbouring services and Halton is presently researching with a number of neighbouring authorities areas where joint working initiatives can be put into practice – and whether or not a single service covering a number of local authorities is feasible. Whilst members and senior managers have endorsed such research, members may well be asked to make key decisions on the way forward, during 2003 / 2004.

A Quality Service - the Division is committed to the provision of a high quality service. It intends to demonstrate this commitment by the attainment of Chartermark status, the pursuit of continuous improvement via use of the EFQM Excellence model, adherence to the Enforcement Concordat and maintenance of its ISO 9000:2000 Quality Management System. In addition, the Management System will evolve into an integrated system that will also address Environmental and Health & Safety standards.

Hitting above our Weight - Consumer Protection Services have traditionally attracted a disproportionate level of media interest and coverage. The attainment of a high media profile will enable the Division to educate and inform the community whilst also raising the profile of the Council as a whole.

Cemeteries And Crematorium

Charter for the Bereaved – work to the 33 Rights of Charter for the bereaved which will assist staff to offer more accurate advice to Service users.

Headstone Safety – the ongoing inspection and recording of the safety of all headstones, in accordance with the revised strategy, will continue to have an impact on staff time.

Improving the Cemeteries Environments – the lawned sections upgrading work will be rolled forward to include sections A to F in Widnes Cemetery. Drainage will be improved in the worst affected areas of the cemeteries and will be installed in the new area of Widnes Cemetery in preparation for its future use for interments. Memorialisation choices will be enhanced for the new Garden of Remembrance in Widnes Cemetery.

Working with Stakeholders –in terms of both the physical environment and the services provided, it is important that developments in Halton's cemeteries and crematorium are introduced after appropriate co-operation and consultation with local clergy, stonemasons, funeral directors and the Halton community.

Registration Service

Impact of New Working Arrangements - the Service is currently reviewing the impact of the location of a Registrar at the Halton Lea, Halton Direct Link for two sessions per week to decide the optimum times of attendance. The Registrar will attend HDL Widnes for three mornings per week.

National Review of the Registration Service – the “Civil Registration: Vital Change” White Paper published in January 2002 will lead to more choice and flexibility in registration and will entail

making full use of modern technology. Local authorities will be responsible for the local Service and will be expected to innovate and provide these registration services in ways that meet the needs of their local communities.

A Customer Focussed Service - officers are committed to providing a high standard of service. The award of the Chartermark in October 2002 demonstrated that over the past three years the high standards of service have been maintained and, in many areas, improved upon. Performance standards are demanding and the provision of new ceremonies for naming and reaffirmation of marriage vows will improve choices.

Citizenship Ceremonies – the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act provides for applicants for British Nationality to make a citizenship oath and pledge at a ceremony in the presence of a Superintendent Registrar in premises provided by the Local Authority or elsewhere. It is expected that the provisions will be brought into force in autumn 2003.

The Resource Context

Finance

The medium term financial situation facing the department is a challenging one. The growing burden placed on services by new legislation and the improved access to the service likely to result from the development of Halton Direct Link (HDL) initiatives (proposed call-centre and Widnes HDL), means that while resources have reduced or remained unaltered, the access to and therefore the demand on those resources has grown and continues to grow significantly.

The income from notices attested due to the Immigration and Asylum Act has remained constant. A clerical assistant has been appointed to meet the additional demands placed on the Service as a result of the Act. The costs have been met from the increased income resulting in a slight net increase in income overall.

Income generated by the 1994 Marriage Act that allowed marriages to take place in various approved premises, rose again this year by £1649 due to the increased number of marriages.

The financial impact of a limited Registration presence in the Halton Lea, Halton Direct Link is under review.

Income from the local authority pollution control (LAPC) subsistence fees is expected to remain constant in the coming financial year although changes in the national charging scheme are a possibility in future years.

The Cemeteries and Crematorium charging structure will be reviewed with a view to setting fees that will help encourage residents of neighbouring authorities to use Halton's Crematorium and will help discourage Halton's residents from using neighbouring crematoria.

The introduction of new and additional legislation and regulation by Central Government continues without recognition of the financial impact of implementation. There are changes pending with the Health & Safety Enforcement Authority Regulations due in April 2003. Under these regulations the HSE will be transferring additional enforcement duties to Local Authorities. The Enforcement Management Model is also due for the new year and will define specifically the decision making process which officers must take for health & safety inspection & enforcement. Both these pieces of legislation will have a major impact on existing health & safety resources.

The European Union has produced draft regulations for all businesses (excluding primary producers) to have fully documented Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems in place and for all food personnel to be trained in HACCP. (Under current regulations, documentation of systems and personnel training is not mandatory.) This will have a major impact on the Food Safety service. Small and medium enterprises will need significant attention. The Food Standards Agency is aware of the need for additional funding but has recently been unsuccessful in a bid for funding from the Treasury. Resourcing this demanding task will need to be found locally necessitating a review of existing priorities.

A strategy for the inspection of contaminated land was published in July 2001 to meet the Government deadline. It laid out how the Council would undertake this mandatory duty to identify in a rational and ordered manner areas of land which would merit detailed inspection and remediation. It was stated at the outset that the extent of the task was not easily quantifiable but would progress in phases over a number of years. Each phase identifying the resource input needed for future phases. In order to move on in regard to this strategy it is essential that additional resources are allocated over the next few years, at least, to finance the required technical support.

The system of Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) applies an integrated environmental approach to the regulation of certain industrial activities. The new controls begin to come into force in April 2003, and the systems are phased in over a period of years. We are already experiencing the impact of this new regime as a consultee of the Environment Agency. As they receive and process applications made to them we receive substantial documentation to digest and comment upon which we do to protect the interests of Halton residents. From April next year we will start to receive our own applications.

The Local air quality review and assessment due in 2003 whilst not as extensive as in previous years is likely to take up some 50 man days and coming on top of changes to LAPC and IPPC will prove resource intensive for the team of scientific officers. The government will be publishing technical guidance and the amount of additional hardware required to fulfil this function will be known then. As in previous years funding for additional resources is through the bids from the supplementary credit approval scheme with a fund of some £2 million pounds available in 2003.

Over recent years, the effect of legislative changes (allowing the likes of scalemakers, petrol pump engineers etc. to self-verify equipment) has seen a reduction in demand for the authority's Weights and Measures verification services. This was the major source of Weights and Measures Income. At the same time, the authority is expected to increase the resources it devotes to its non-income generating Weights and Measures inspection programme.

Similarly, with regard to the Service's petroleum storage enforcement role, new legislation is likely to see the abolition of the annual licence fee for petroleum storage – to be replaced by a one-off, lifetime "consent to store" fee. It is anticipated that this will lead to a reduction in income, without any corresponding reduction in the demand placed upon resources. Indeed, the additional effort that will have to be put into amending systems/training staff will see an increased demand on resources during 2003/2004.

There is still a possibility of change in legislation requiring abatement equipment to be fitted to all crematoria, which if introduced will have a financial impact on the Service.

Human Resources

It is hoped that increases to the staffing establishments of both the Environmental Health and Consumer Protection Services can be agreed for 2003 / 2004, to meet the increasing workload demands placed on these areas of work.

It is hoped that the career grade scheme for Trading Standards Officers will solve the current recruitment and retention problems.

Property and Physical Resources

The department will be relocating to different office accommodation within the Grosvenor House complex in 2003. Other than this move there are no significant changes/opportunities relating to land, buildings, equipment and materials impacting on the Department's services, but inevitably there will be involvement with development of electronic government.

Information and communication technology requirements

- Different sections of the Department will seriously consider moving across to the "thin-client" facility, once this becomes generally available. In addition to enhancing remote access, it is hoped that moving across to this system will eliminate the plethora of PC problems that are presently seriously inhibiting officer performance.
- The provision of a networked CD stacker tower is being explored to streamline access to CD ROM based information.
- An effective departmental PC back-up facility needs to be researched and introduced. It is likely that financial support will be required for this.
- The task of producing and maintaining Web/Intranet pages about the services offered by the Department is proving to be a significant additional resource burden. The Department will try to secure some e-government money to ensure that all of the challenges of electronic service delivery may be met over the coming years.
- The provision of local video conferencing facilities needs to be explored both to enable officers to communicate with HDL customers and to enable "virtual meetings" of regional or even national groups of officers to be held.
- The Department, together with IT business management, will develop a Service Level Agreement with I.T. Services. Such an agreement should include customer service standards and should help the Department make the most efficient and effective use of ICT.
- Longer term, as "voice recognition" software becomes more sophisticated, its use will be assessed.
- The use of "hand-held" IT equipment by field officers, enabling simple downloading of stored information into the Department's database will be explored in the medium term.
- A 24-hour booking service for cremations will be introduced following the upgrading of the Cemeteries and Crematorium computer system.
- The Registration Service operates its own computer software package using "Lotus Notes". The January 2002 White Paper provides for people to be able to register births and deaths on-line, by phone or in person. A central national database will be created for recording vital life

events. The provision of these facilities will be phased over the next five years and are likely to require major in-house IT developments.

Outlook

Three areas have been identified where there is particular pressure on the service namely: implementing the contaminated land strategy; meeting the demand for consumer advice and administering and developing the FLARE computerised database. Re-engineering of existing resources cannot readily address these pressures and a need for three additional personnel one in each of these areas has been identified as a priority growth item.

A number of new factors have been identified above for which the resource demand cannot at the moment be readily quantified, Whilst it will almost certainly necessitate some reprioritisation of existing resources it is equally likely that it will result in additional functions and duties demanding additional resources. These will need to be assessed and quantified as the changes are clarified.

HITTING THE TARGET: MEASURING OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Plans are no use if they do not produce real results. We need to set targets and measure our performance to know if we are achieving the improvements intended. Three types of indicator are used here to do this:

- **Key milestones and projects.** These show the major events in the work of the Department that are planned to take place during 2003/2006, such as the launch of new initiatives, production of key plans and strategies and progress on major projects.
- Measurable local performance indicator targets. These show performance on indicators that the Department or the Council has adopted locally themselves and those adopted from national and other sources.
- Measurable 'Best Value' targets. These show performance on indicators that are prescribed by central Government as part of their drive to ensure that councils deliver best value in serving their local communities.

KEY MILESTONES AND PROJECTS

(Key milestones/indicators are shown as shaded)

The Key Objectives referred to in the table below are:

- 1B To lay firm foundations for a healthy start in life for the youngest people in our community
- 1C To actively promote and provide information about positive health and lifestyle choices to all residents of Halton Borough Council
- 1E To safeguard the health of the public.
- 2B To promote the sustainable development and regeneration of the Halton economy.
- 2H To reclaim and make most productive use of derelict and contaminated land in the Borough.
- 3E To improve opportunities for the personal development of young people, particularly those who are disenfranchised, disaffected or hard to reach.
- 4D To include and enhance the quality of life of those who are genuinely less able to help themselves.
- 5B To address the public's three top priorities for community safety.
- 5F To create and sustain a safer living environment in Halton and reduce the fear of crime.

5G To ensure progressive and sustainable environmental improvements in all areas of the Borough reflecting the priorities of the public

5J To safeguard and improve air quality in Halton

Milestone or project	Link to key objective	Expected position by 31 st March 2004	Expected position by 31 st March 2005	Expected position by 31 st March 2006
Consumer Protection				
Roll forward the Validate proof-of-age card	1D	Cards offered to 100% of year 11 pupils in Halton	Cards offered to 100% of year 11 pupils and 100% of VIth Form pupils in Halton	Research into accessing 16-18 year old people no longer in full-time education. Cards offered to 100% of year 11 pupils and 100% of VIth Form pupils in Halton
Develop initiatives to tackle the problem of distraction burglary.	5F	Inter-agency Action Plan developed.	Priority actions from the Action Plan implemented and Action Plan evaluated.	Remaining actions from the Action Plan implemented and Action Plan evaluated.
Improve access for the socially excluded.	4D	Research with community groups completed. Action Plan produced.	Priority actions from the Action Plan implemented	Remaining actions from the Action Plan implemented
Test-purchasing of age-related products	1E	2 exercises completed	4 exercises completed	4 exercises completed
Trader Registration Scheme	2B	Research with local traders and organisations completed and Scheme finalised.	Official launch having secured 10-12 members.	Scheme marketed and membership increased.
School education programme	3E	Programme produced and piloted in one school.	Programme offered to at least 50% of appropriate schools.	Programme offered to 100% of appropriate schools.
Community Trading Standards Service Delivery Plan		Plan endorsed by Members and submitted to the DTI by June 2003.	Plan endorsed by Members and submitted to the DTI by June 2004.	Plan endorsed by Members and submitted to the DTI by June 2005.

Milestone or project	Link to key objective	Expected position by 31 st March 2004	Expected position by 31 st March 2005	Expected position by 31 st March 2006
Chartermark Application for consumer protection service		Chartermark awarded.	Service standards maintained.	Service standards maintained.
Age related sales Action Plan	1E	Plan produced and endorsed by Members.	Plan produced and endorsed by Members.	Plan produced and endorsed by Members.
EFQM Self-assessment		Assessment completed and Quality Improvement Plan produced by end of June 2003.	Assessment completed and Quality Improvement Plan produced by end of June 2004.	Assessment completed and Quality Improvement Plan produced by end of June 2005.
Benchmarking exercise		Exercise completed.		
Conversion of ISO 9000 system, incorporating Environmental and Health and Safety standards		Registration against ISO 9001:2000	Registration against ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001.	
Research the “buying-in” of different elements of the Consumer Protection Service and the feasibility of joining with one or more neighbouring Unitary / Metropolitan Authorities to provide a joint Consumer Protection Service.		Report submitted Dec. 2003		
Review and update the Consumer Protection Service Strategy for responding to 24/7 trading.		Consultation with public & traders.	Updated strategy reported	
Cemetery and Cremation service				
Continue cemeteries upgrading programme	5G	Level and seed two grave sections Halton cemetery Turfing of lawn sections Widnes and Runcorn Create new cremated remains section Widnes cemetery Introduce new	Levelling and seeding two further sections in all three cemeteries	

Milestone or project	Link to key objective	Expected position by 31 st March 2004	Expected position by 31 st March 2005	Expected position by 31 st March 2006
		memorialisation in Four Seasons Garden of Remembrance Widnes.		
Major repair works to surface of roadways and pathways Runcorn and Widnes cemetery	5G	Completed by March 2004		
Acquisition of additional land for Widnes cemetery extension		Completion of assessment of available potential land	Detailed site specific negotiations complete	Acquisition completed or underway
Registration service				
To prepare historical marriage indexes for registration service		Indexes completed for 1900-1910 by March 2004.	Indexes completed for 1910-1915 by March 2005.	Indexes completed for 1915-1920 by March 2006.
Reapply for Chartermark for Registration Service				Reapplication made by March 2006
Provision of Citizenship ceremonies under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act		Framework in place	Ceremonies conducted	Review ceremonies programme
Environmental Health				
Undertake a further review and assessment of air quality in line with requirements laid out in anticipated national guidance and report findings to DEFRA.	5J	By December 2003 completed and returns made to DEFRA	Further annual review complete and returns made to DEFRA	Further annual review complete and returns made to DEFRA
Continue to implement the Strategy for Inspection of Contaminated Land and finalise the characterisation of the district and the assessments for prioritising the land packages identified as potentially contaminated	2H	Characterisation and prioritisation completed by October 2003	Programme of detailed inspection and quantitative risk assessment underway	Continuation of programme of detailed inspection and quantitative risk assessment underway projects of remediation being drafted
Implement Food Standards Agency action plan on food safety and standards enforcement (This project is significant to the CPA)	IE	Completed by end October 2003		

Milestone or project	Link to key objective	Expected position by 31 st March 2004	Expected position by 31 st March 2005	Expected position by 31 st March 2006
Following consultation within the Cheshire Health & Safety group, the Competency Management Framework, developed to ensure the competency of health & safety officers, will be modified and adopted by all members of the working group.	1E	Framework development completed and adopted by march 2004		
Complete the next annual review the Food Service inspection plan	1E	Review completed and preparations for 2005 review in place by April 2003	Review completed and preparations for 2006 review in place	Review completed and preparations for 2007 review in place
Draft and present the newly required Health & Safety Service Plan	1E	Completed shared with members and published by May 2003	Annual review and 2006 update shared with members	Annual review and 2007 update shared with members
To complete and consolidate the Food and Health Safety Unit's adoption of the Cheshire Food Group Competency Management Framework.		Integrated into enforcement practices and procedures of the Division by May 2003		
The Health & Safety Team will be carrying out an inter-authority audit within Cheshire and Merseyside Liaison groups		Audit completed and findings acted upon in 2003.		
The Food Team is committed to carrying out an inter-authority audit with Cheshire and Merseyside Food Liaison groups		Audit completed and findings acted upon in 2003.		
Consult and review Group enforcement policies		Reviewed and findings shared with members by March 2004		Further Review with findings shared with members
Dependent upon anticipated changes to statutory guidance from central government move to a risk based audit regime for LAPC and authorised processes	5J	Risk based assessment complete in 2003	established as basis for inspections from April 2004	
The Food and Health Safety Unit will continue throughout this and subsequent years to develop the Unit web site to facilitate public access to our services, information and allow them the opportunity feedback on the services they receive from us.	1C	Provide information for businesses and public including children & young people. Ensure facility to count number of users of site & ability to report requests for service directly.	User friendly informative web site Carry out promotion to encourage and increase use of web.	User friendly informative web site Increase users of the website by 5% from base figure

Milestone or project	Link to key objective	Expected position by 31 st March 2004	Expected position by 31 st March 2005	Expected position by 31 st March 2006
To continue to focus on empowering and informing businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises as highlighted by the Government, by developing and disseminating tailored business packs.		Ascertain numbers of packs circulated to date. Ensure all new premises are provided with packs.	Provide packs to all new businesses. Aim to provide all businesses, particularly low risk (fewer visits) businesses.	
The department will continue to raise the profile of the work carried out by the Divisions and in particular to develop information on the authority's website that is both informative and useful and gives members of the public the opportunity to comment on their experience of our service.		User friendly informative web site	User friendly informative web site	User friendly informative web site
Food and Health & Safety Teaching Resource for primary school children covering personal hygiene & safety.	1E	Develop teaching resource. Pilot and present to Regional Liaison Group. Pursue financial assistance	Incorporate within Health Schools Initiative. Present to school councils. Make resource available on Unit web site and send to all schools I Halton.	Make resource available to all schools on CDrom. Promote and encourage uptake within schools
<i>Going Up</i> pack for all school children in Halton moving to secondary school. Covers personal safety, health & development.	3E	Review & modify packs in response to evaluations. Pursue funding for packs.	Ensure funding as annual event	
Young Workers pack. Occupational safety for young people in first jobs	1B	Establish Working Group. Confirm information to be included in pack & method of dissemination. Pursue funding	Produce & pilot packs, including evaluation.	Review & improve pack & greater promotion of packs
Workplace Smoking Policies.	1E	Focus on caterers within Halton. Raise awareness of smoking issues & promote as first step provision of no smoking areas	Officers to identify caterers likely to consider smoking issues. follow up with guidance and information about smoking controls	Evaluate outcomes of project and seek to roll out in other food groups.

Milestone or project	Link to key objective	Expected position by 31 st March 2004	Expected position by 31 st March 2005	Expected position by 31 st March 2006
Establishing Food Safety control systems (such as HACCP) in Food businesses	1E	In conjunction with the FSA targets. Record on computer the level of controls in food businesses in Halton. Establish how many have no or very little basic controls.	Identify and focus on those premises with no or little controls. Provide information and support to set up basic systems of control.	Review outcomes in order to plan next stage of action.
HAPPI Halton Accident Prevention Partnership for Infants	1C	Establish Working Group. Apply for DTI bid funding. Plan & pilot training for new parents of infants. Organise dissemination of free safety equipment for new parents Pilot system within SURE START areas in Halton	Secure further funding for project for another year	Secure funding in order to roll out to all other areas of Halton
To work towards application for the Chartermark award by the Food and Health & Safety Unit with a target for application		-	Chartermark application mid 2004 and dependant on outcome potential reapplication in subsequent year	
To work towards application for the Chartermark award by the pest control service with a target for application				All preparation work completed for application. by early 2006

Local Performance Indicator Targets

Reference	Indicator	Link to corporate plan key objective	Actual 2002-03 [est.]	Target 2002-03	Target 2003-4	Target 2004-5	Target 2005-6
Consumer Protection Validate	No. of year 11 pupils offered a Validate card.	1E	New	New	100%	100%	100%

Reference	Indicator	Link to corporate plan key objective	Actual 2002-03 [est.]	Target 2002-03	Target 2003-4	Target 2004-5	Target 2005-6
	No. of VIth Form pupils offered a Validate card.	1E	New	New	100%	100%	100%
Consumer Protection Distraction burglaries	Number of older adults educated in relation to bogus callers and distraction burglaries	5F	New	New	10% of older adult population	20% of older adult population	30% of older adult population
	Increase in the no. of over 65's who use existing safety features such as safety chains and spy holes.	5F	New	New	0	0	10% increase
Consumer Protection Improving access	Increase in the number of contacts from consumers living in the most deprived wards.	4D	New	New	10% increase	15% increase	20% increase
Consumer Protection Age related sales	Test-purchasing of age related products	1E	New	New	40 traders visited and 'tested'	80 traders visited and 'tested'	80 traders visited and 'tested'
Consumer Protection Trader Registration Scheme	Membership of the trader registration scheme	2B	New	New	NA	12 members	25 members
Consumer Protection School education programme	Number of schools offered the education programme	3E	New	New	1 school piloted	All schools within target age range participating	
Cemeteries and Crematorium	Carry out all cremations within 24 hours of the receipt of written instructions.		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Carry out all interments within 48 hours of the receipt of written instructions		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Reference	Indicator	Link to corporate plan key objective	Actual 2002-03 [est.]	Target 2002-03	Target 2003-4	Target 2004-5	Target 2005-6
Registration Service	We will process applications for current certificates on the day of receipt.		96%	100%	96%	97%	98%
	We will process applications for historical certificates within 3 working days.		36%	100%	60%	70%	80%
	We will attend to clients within 10 minutes of their appointment time.		99%	100%	99%	99%	99%
	Clients without an appointment will be offered an appointment or will be attended to, as soon as possible. We aim to attend to such clients within 10 minutes of arrival.		95%	100%	95%	96%	97%
Environmental Health	Respond to environmental protection complainants within three working days	1E ,5J	New indicator	-	97%	98%	99%
	Percentage of due LAPC audits carried out per quarter	5J	New indicator	-	97%	98%	99%
	Respond to complaints regarding occupational health & working conditions within three working day	1E	New indicator	-	99%	99%	99%
	Respond to major incidents relating to accidents at work within one working day.	1E	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Respond to all Food hazard Warnings within 1 working day and carry out requests for action by FSA.	1E	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Respond to all food service requests within 3 working days.	1E	New		100%	100%	100%

Reference	Indicator	Link to corporate plan key objective	Actual 2002-03 [est.]	Target 2002-03	Target 2003-4	Target 2004-5	Target 2005-6
	Percentage of due food hygiene inspections to be carried out in High risk premises Other premises	1E	High risk premises 89% Other premises 70%	High risk premises 90% Other premises 68%	High risk premises 95% Other premises 75%	High risk premises 97% Other premises 85%	High risk premises 99% Other premises 95%
	Percentage of due Food Standards inspections to be carried out in High risk premises Medium risk premises	1E	High risk premises 85% Other premises 70%	High risk premises 90% Other premises 68%	High risk premises 93% Other premises 75%	High risk premises 95% Other premises 80%	High risk premises 98% Other premises 90%

Note 1. Actual figures for 2002/2003 not yet available.

BEST VALUE TARGETS

Reference	Performance Indicator	Link to corporate plan key objective	Actual 2001/2	Quartile	National Avg. 2001/2	actual (2002/03 est)	Target to be in the top quartile	Targets			
								2002/03	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
BVPI 166	Strategic objective										
	Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for: a) Environmental Health b) Trading Standards	1E	48% 90%	Bot Top	58% 67%	90% 53%	73% 76%	90% 100%	95% 100%	100% 100%	100% 100%

COST OF THE SERVICE

The total cost of the service is £2,432,000 being the net cost before income from recharges.

2003-04 Revenue Budget

Planned Revenue spending on the service is as follows:

	Gross Expenditure £000	Income £000	Recharge Income £000	Net Expenditure £000
Licensing	106	-116	0	-10
General Health Services	191	0	-191	0
Food, Drugs & Safety of Premises	578	-4	0	574
Environmental Protection	574	-6	0	568
Air Pollution	35	-39	0	-4
Pest Control/Dog Wardens	271	-65	0	206
Cemeteries	561	-248	0	313
Crematorium	113	-194	0	-81
Consumer Protection	524	-26	0	498
Registrar Services	250	-73	0	177
Total Service Expenditure	3,203	-771	-191	2,241

Budget issues for 2003-06

Consumer Protection-Due to the decline in demand for verification work in this area (although the demand for inspections remains the same) the income from weights and measures work is expected to be significantly less in 2003-04 and future years.

Environmental health -The installation of additional dog waste bins continues to be a frequent issue raised by the public. Some have been paid for by one of the area panels which in itself raises the issue of ongoing revenue costs for empty tying and maintenance with each bin costing some £65 per annum to empty twice per week. At the moment there are no plans to extend the number to other areas and no budget allocation is made

An assumption has been made that any additional financial resource for the review and assessment of air quality will be financed as in previous years from supplementary credit approvals although this has not been confirmed.

Cemeteries and crematorium - The deletion of the non-residential fee for cremations could result in significant growth in income in this area over the three year period.

2003-04 Capital Programme

There is no planned capital spending.

REPORTING ON PROGRESS: HOW PLANS WILL BE MONITORED

One of the main purposes of having a Service Plan is to enable interested members of the public to keep track of how the Council and its Departments are doing and to help Councillors and managers see whether the service is performing as planned and achieving its targets.

Progress will be monitored through:

- Day to day monitoring by Executive Directors through their regular interaction with Operational Directors.
- 6 weekly progress reports to Management Team.
- The inclusion of service plan monitoring reports as a standard item on the agenda of all the Council's Policy and Performance Boards.

Policy and Performance Board agenda are public documents and can be accessed free using Internet access at any library where assistance with the technology is available if needed.

End