

**CABINET
24 APRIL 2007**

**DIRECTORATE OF
COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
REPORT NO. EH07021**

**NATIONAL ENFORCEMENT PRIORITIES FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY
REGULATORY SERVICES – ROGERS REVIEW**

INTRODUCTION

- This report provides an update on Government regulatory reform which is aimed at reducing burdens on businesses and supporting compliance. As part of this process the Rogers Review has now confirmed National Enforcement Priorities for Local Authority Regulatory Services. These have a resonance with our local strategic objectives. Cabinet is also invited to consider both the Food Safety, and Health and Safety Service Plans in the light of regulatory reform as both services are selected by Rogers as National Enforcement Priorities.

BACKGROUND

- There is an increasing demand for regulatory reform, with the aim of promoting more efficient approaches to businesses while continuing to deliver regulatory outcomes. This review process was largely initiated by the Hampton Review in 2005.
- In November 2006, a Government report “Implementing Hampton: From Enforcement to Compliance” detailed the progress made on the Hampton Review. This report charged the Cabinet Office with responsibility for implementing Hampton principles across LA regulatory services. As part of this agenda, the Government has introduced a statutory code of practice, the “Regulators Compliance Code” to ensure that regulatory best practice will be adopted by local authority regulators.
- To ensure the delivery of regulatory reform, the Chancellor also announced the creation of the Local Better Regulation Office. LBRO's role will be to assist LAs reduce burdens on business without compromising regulatory outcomes and to work with local authorities to help drive up the quality of local authority regulatory services.

THE ROGERS REVIEW

- The Rogers Review, published in March, embodies Hampton recommendations. The Review defines five “national enforcement priorities for local authority regulatory services”. These are:
 - **Hygiene of Businesses** selling, distributing and manufacturing food and the safety and fitness of food in the premises
 - **Improving Health in the Workplace**
 - **Alcohol, Entertainment and Late Night Refreshment Licensing and enforcement**
 - **Air Quality**, including regulation of pollution from factories and homes
 - **Fair Trading**

- These priorities bring a resonance with our own strategic objectives. The priorities reflect the key roles of Environmental Health in securing high standards of food hygiene, health and safety, air quality and in our licensing regime all of which contribute to our Safe and Clean objectives. Our Food, and Health and Safety Service plans identify new ways of working to deliver many elements of the Hampton principles and gives recognition to these service areas as national priorities. The plans are put before Cabinet to review in the light of these reforms.
- The national enforcement priorities were defined with the intention of helping local authorities plan resources and prioritise activities. The Rogers Review found local authorities at County and District level deliver 64 key areas of regulation which were distilled into the five priorities outlined above. The review adds that by providing clear priorities, the value of these services can be highlighted to local political leaders and to the wider community.
- The review is particularly timely as the Local Government White Paper shows a clear willingness by central government to devolve more power to LAs to shape their activities and decide how best to achieve outcomes. It is also likely that these priority areas will be subject to performance measurement to ensure delivery as the Audit Commission moves from Comprehensive Performance Assessment to Comprehensive Area Assessment.

ESTABLISHING LOCAL PRIORITIES

- The review makes it clear that the setting of national enforcement priorities does not lessen government support for other areas of enforcement, nor does it relieve a local authority of its statutory obligations. Similarly the review should not be used to consider cuts in areas not selected as national priorities.
- Rogers further acknowledges that LAs are best placed to understand and respond to issues that affect the well-being of their communities and the quality of life of their residents. Whilst many areas of regulation do not satisfy the criteria for a national enforcement priority, the review recognises that, at a local level, these may make a huge difference to the quality of life of residents and communities and therefore *local* priorities for enforcement may be adopted in addition to the *national* priorities.
- It will be necessary therefore for the Council to determine local priorities, for example, housing standards and response nuisance complaints and this will be brought back before members in due course.

RECOMMENDATION

- Cabinet is recommended to note the report and to consider the Food Safety, and the Health and Safety Service Plans in the light of this report.

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Background Papers: None

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