

<b>Subject:</b>	Peer Review Environmental Health	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny	<b>Date:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> August 2011
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Health, Housing and Regeneration	<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Regeneration
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Community Impact Assessment:</b>	Required: No	Attached:	No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment</b>	Required: No	Attached:	No
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1.	<b>RECOMMENDATION(S)</b>
1.1	That Overview & Scrutiny note the contents of this report as a conclusion to the peer review process undertaken by the Place Directorate predominantly focusing on Environmental Health in 2010.

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 Rossendale Borough Council's Environmental Health Department took part in a Peer Review of the service and associated functions in January 2010. The review undertaken by a Peer Authority was part of a national bench marking exercise developed by the Local Government Regulation, previously LACORS, to help local authorities deliver the highest quality services possible whilst taking into account local priorities.

## 3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:

- **A clean and green Rossendale** – creating a better environment for all.
- **A healthy and successful Rossendale** – supporting vibrant communities and a strong economy.
- **Responsive and value for money local services** – responding to and meeting the different needs of customers and improving the cost effectiveness of services.

## 4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

## 5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

5.1 A peer review was undertaken in January 2010 of the Place Directorate predominantly focussing on the Environmental Health Team who at the time incorporated the existing licensing and the public protection unit. The aim of the peer review was to provide support to the existing service and enable continuous service improvement through a number of avenues such as by, identifying variance in performance and understanding the reasons behind it. Peer review's also allow services and functions to be compared by output and performance and can provide an evidence base for further review and action planning.

5.2 Following completion of the Peer Review a number of actions were identified through an

Environmental Health Improvement Plan (Appendix 1) and as these actions were addressed they have been reported through the Council's Covalent System.

- 5.3 The service was subject to a substantial restructure in June 2010 when Environmental Health merged with Housing and Regeneration and Licensing and Public Protection became part of the Business directorate. This merge allowed a number of management issues identified within the Environmental Health Improvement Plan to be addressed.
- 5.4 There are still some outstanding actions from the plan that the team are working on and these will be addressed over the coming twelve months as part of the service's business plan.

**COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:**

**6. SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 6.1 Any financial implications arising from the report or the action plan will be met from existing budget resources.

**7. MONITORING OFFICER**

- 7.1 No additional comments.

**8. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)**

- 8.1 No HR issues.

**9. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT**

- 9.1 Direct consultation with:-
- Portfolio Holder for Health, Housing and Regeneration

**10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 This update review is an information item to keep members abreast of actions being undertaken by Environmental Health to improve the service following the Peer Review in January 2010.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Service and Business Plans	Attached

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## PEER REVIEW

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

IMPROVEMENT	ACTION	When	MEASUREMENT
<p><b><u>Imp 1</u></b> Better communication with businesses</p>	<p>Complete the project for the development of a business communication process involving written material, emailing system or other appropriate methods for achieving two-way communication</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The team have developed a number of documents that are suitable for new and existing businesses. They are also looking to develop training sessions with new food business to set them on the right track and assist them in completing their 'Safer Food; Better Business' packs. Over, the next twelve months we will also be completing a Commercial Enforcement Policy which will detail a number of actions of how we will interact with businesses in a proactive manner.</p>
<p><b><u>Imp 2</u></b> Member briefing</p>	<p>Develop a process for briefing Members, especially new Members following elections, in the activities, capabilities and constraints in relation to environmental health services.</p>	<p>March 2012</p>	<p>As part of the wider team structure within Health, Housing and Regeneration we are looking to undertake a meet the team session with members. We have regular meetings with our new portfolio holder Andy McNae to keep him abreast of the work the team undertake as well as actively contributing to Member's briefings and Covalent Reports.</p>
<p><b><u>Imp 3</u></b> Collaboration with Customer Services staff and Client Services.</p>	<p>Develop a set of flowcharted procedures showing environmental health services, complete with scripting where necessary, so that the service can appear seamless to customers when a service is requested through the One Stop Shop and Client Services.</p>	<p>March 2012</p>	<p>This in the main has been completed for the majority of procedures. However, there are a number of relatively new functions that the team have started to use associated around empty properties such as Enforced Sale; Building Act, Defective Buildings; and Empty Dwelling Management Orders which will be worked up over the next twelve months as part of the Vacant Property Strategy.</p>
<p><b><u>Imp 4</u></b> Targeting</p>	<p>Implement a project to determine areas of greatest deprivation in order to be able to</p>	<p>June 2011</p>	<p>As part of the Vacant Property Task Group we have identified a number of areas which</p>

resources to reduce health inequalities	target resources to those specific areas or functions.		will be subject to Area Based Enforcement and Health Impact Projects. These areas have been delineated by a number of triggers such as number of vacants; number of private rented; number of benefit claims; number of fire incidences; crime and burglary data; and secondary information from neighbourhood forums.
<b>Imp 5</b> Understand non-users of services	Create a process for determining the reasons for non-use of services and non-return of questionnaires from existing customers.	March 2012	As part of this year's service plan for all functions including homelessness we are looking in detail at Customer Satisfaction Forms and returns and how we can get better, substantive data which we can use to improve the service.
<b>Imp 6</b> Customer contract	Develop a customer contract that clearly states the service that they will receive, provides written promise of our performance and agrees the way they will be kept involved in the progress of their request.	March 2011	All of the teams functions have service standards which they adhere to, where these are missed then the customer is notified of the reasons for any delays.
<b>Imp 7</b> Website presence	Review existing website pages and ensure that relevant information is available and up to date.	March 2012	This will be undertaken as part of the Environmental Health Student Placements for 2011 – 2012.
<b>Imp 8</b> Flexible Structure	Complete the restructure of the EH Service to improve flexibility and staff capacity	June 2010	Completed as part of merger with Housing and Regeneration.
<b>Imp 9</b> Mobile working	Undertake testing of mobile IT facilities to facilitate the remote collection of information and communication with the database.	June 2010	Project completed cost to Council too prohibitive and officers have the ability to use the Council's STAN Van for onsite working and dissemination of information.
<b>Imp 10</b> Liaison with other Departments	Develop liaison arrangements with other Departments to explain what we do and how others services can help us.	March 2011	Completed as part of merger with Housing and Regeneration. Protocol established with Planning – Development Control around effective contributions to planning applications.

<b><u>Imp 11</u></b> Quality assurance	Improve the way procedures are developed, implemented and achievement is monitored.	Ongoing	As part of merger with Housing and Regeneration the team have taken a number of policies and strategies through O&S, Cabinet and Council such as the Animal Boarding Establishments Policy; Illegal Eviction and Harassment; and Private Water Supplies. We have a suite of policies and strategies coming up over the next twelve months for adoption which will provide a consistent and clear service to customers. As well as providing regular updates through Covalent on the adoption and monitoring of these strategies.
<b><u>Imp 12</u></b> Staff competency	Complete the preparation of staff competency framework for all posts within EH.	June 2011	Completed as part of 2010/11 – PDR Process.
<b><u>Imp 13</u></b> Document retention and disposal	Ensure documents are stored, retained and disposed of in accordance with service requirements and corporate standards.	March 2012	As part of the development of Stubbylee we will be utilising one of the rooms within Futures Park for storing evidence and documentation to support enforcement work by officers. All officers will be trained and aware of the process for storing documentation and evidence.
<b><u>Imp 14</u></b> Staff sign up to corporate priorities	Develop a simple visual representation of priorities and how staff activities contribute to their delivery	Ongoing	Officers have been more involved in “seeing outcomes” to their project work and this needs to be an ongoing activity and rather than a visual representation they need to see actual outcomes recent activity has seen officers linking CAF Assessment Forms to Housing Inspections and the follow through actions associated to that work.
<b><u>Imp 15</u></b> Individual workplans	Develop individual workplans for each post and ensure personal responsibility for its delivery	March 2011	Completed. We have developed individual service plans and officers contribute towards these service plans within their 1 to 1s.
<b><u>Imp 16</u></b>	Implement time recording for all significant	Ongoing	To be developed as part of 2011/12 Business

Time Recording	services and establish a means for calculating the cost per service delivery.		Plan.
<b><u>Imp 17</u></b> Social marketing	Implement means for influencing the behaviour of people and businesses in order to prevent problems before they arise.	Ongoing	The team have developed a number of documents that are suitable for new and existing businesses. They are also looking to develop training sessions with new food business to set them on the right track and assist them in completing their 'Safer Food; Better Business' packs. Over, the next twelve months we will also be completing a Commercial Enforcement Policy which will detail a number of actions of how we will interact with businesses in a proactive manner.
<b><u>Imp 18</u></b> Enforcement	Ensure staff are trained on correct note taking, evidence gathering and are confident to take legal action in conformance with the enforcement policy	Ongoing	This has been included as part of the competency framework for all posts within EH.