

**REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
19TH FEBRUARY 2001**

REPORT ON: FOOD STANDARDS JOINT AUDIT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

REPORT NO: 100-2001

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To propose arrangements to satisfy the requirement for the Council to have an audit scheme covering food standard enforcement activities.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Council agrees to participate in the proposed Food Standards – Joint Audit Board Scotland.
- 2.2 That the Council agree to the composition of the proposed board as shown in Appendix 1.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The cost to the Council is anticipated to be £1,200 per annum and can be met from the Environmental and Consumer Protection Department's revenue budget.

4.0 DUNDEE 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Access to good food, water, shelter and fuel at a reasonable cost.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6.0 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 The White Paper "The Food Standards Agency – A Force for Change" identified the need for stronger links between central and local government on food law enforcement.
- 6.2 The White Paper also identified the Food Standards Agency (FSA) as having a key role in overseeing local authority enforcement activities.
- 6.3 The Food Standards Act 1999 requires an audit scheme covering the food standards enforcement activities of local authorities.
- 6.4 To take the establishment of an audit scheme forward, a joint steering group comprising the following bodies was set up: -

Food Standards Agency (FSA)
COSLA
Scottish Food Co-Ordinating Committee (SFCC)
Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland (SOCEHIS)

- 6.5 The Steering Group commissioned QCS International Ltd to undertake a feasibility study and to recommend the most appropriate method of carrying out the necessary audit.
- 6.6 The recommendation by QCS International is that the establishment of a Food Safety Audit Board with a structure as shown in Appendix 2, represents the best option. (Appendix 2 is an extract from the QCS International Ltd report).
- 6.7 Auditing would be carried out on the basis of a partial audit of each local authority being undertaken on an annual basis.
- 6.8 The scheme proposed by QCS International is acceptable to the Food Standards Agency who have intimated that they would be willing to provide £25,000 towards start up costs and thereafter £30,000 for the contract period of 3 years.
- 6.9 The proposal is to run the audit scheme for a trial period of 3 years, with annual reviews taking place, followed by a final review at the expiry of the 3 years.
- 6.10 It is considered that this proposal represents Best Value for the Council in the need to provide an audit scheme. The proposal will also assist the Council in undertaking a Best Value assessment of the food safety functions.
- 6.11 It is also considered that the system proposed would allow councils to have an influence in the auditing process, yet still be wholly transparent and credible to the food trade and the public.
- 6.12 The Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection has now been asked to intimate to COSLA the Council's support for this initiative.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

Chief Executive
Director of Support Services
Director of Finance

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 There are no background papers associated with the compilation of this report.

9.0 SIGNATURE

Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection

Date: 1st February 2001

Appendix 1

Proposed Board

Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (1)
Food Standards Agency (Scotland) (2)
Scottish Food Advisory Committee (1)
Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (1)
Scottish Food Co-Ordinating Committee (1)
Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland (1)
Scottish Consumer Council (1)
Trade (1)

Appendix 2

Food Safety Audit Board – Structure

The recommended scheme would have the following structure:

