

**REPORT TO:** COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE – 25th  
APRIL 2016

**REPORT ON:** TAYSIDE AND FIFE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & TRADING  
STANDARDS RESOURCE SHARING PARTNERSHIP

**REPORT BY:** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

**REPORT NO:** 156-2016

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To seek approval for the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Angus, Fife and Perth & Kinross Councils, which details the scope and mechanism for sharing resources within the Environmental Health and Trading Standards services.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- notes the contents of this report and the proposed resource sharing potential;
- remits the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and commence the shared services arrangements as required; and
- notes the further ongoing strategic review of trading standards in Scotland as outlined in 4.5 below.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The Executive Director of Corporate Services advises that there are no direct financial implications with this report.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 Reference is made to Article V of the Minute of the Meeting of the Environment Committee of 11th November 2013 (AN 122-2013 refers), which noted the contents of the Audit Scotland Report, on behalf of the Accounts Commission, regarding the operation of Trading Standards and Food Safety Services across Scotland. This, along with the earlier Christie Commission Report, advises that councils should work together to develop partnerships and closer working relationships in order to maximise the efficiencies and effectiveness of their services.

4.2 Officers from Dundee City Council together with colleagues in Angus, Perth & Kinross and Fife Council identified service areas that could benefit from sharing resources, including staff expertise and equipment. Although the Audit Scotland Report focused mainly on Trading Standards and Food Safety areas of service, the four council working group examined a wider remit including the public health and environmental compliance work undertaken by Environmental Health services. A number of areas of service where there is already significant cooperation, along with additional specialist services have been identified and are the subject of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

4.3 The MoU details the procedure and mechanism for formally sharing and lending of equipment and expertise on a balanced neutral cost basis. The MoU also provides an inventory of the equipment and specialised staff held by each of the four councils.

- 4.4 Most local authorities have sufficient resources to deliver the services that they are routinely required to provide (e.g. food business inspections), however where an authority has experience of a particular specialism such as contaminated land, pollution clean ups, new psychoactive substances etc. such resources can be shared in order to avoid additional costs that may be associated with engaging with external consultants. Specialist items of plant such as LPG calibration meters can also be shared in lieu of each authority individually purchasing their own requirements.
- 4.5 Administration and monitoring of the performance of the arrangements detailed within the MoU will be carried out by a representative from the relevant services of each council (the Resource Sharing Group – RSG). The RSG is also actively seeking discussions with further local authorities in order to identify where further resource sharing potential exists.
- 4.6 Closely connected with the theme of this report, members are advised of continuing discussions between COSLA, SOLACE, and professional bodies, regarding trading standards services. It is anticipated that details of proposed service delivery model options for trading standards in Scotland will be brought forward in the coming months. Thereafter, a further report will be brought to the Committee.

## **5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

## **6.0 CONSULTATIONS**

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Executive Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Memorandum of Understanding.

Elaine Zwirlein  
**Executive Director of  
Neighbourhood Services**

Tom Stirling  
**Head of Community Safety and Protection**

25<sup>th</sup> April 2016