

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Community Safety Committee

28 October 2015

**Regulatory Services in the Environment Service
2014/15 Performance**

Report by Director (Environment)

This report highlights the community safety work carried out by the Environment Service's Regulatory Services, and sets out future priorities for the team.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

Regulatory Services

- 1.1 Regulatory Services within Environmental and Consumer Services, in the Environment Service, cover activities such as Environmental Health, Food Safety, Trading Standards, Animal Feedstuffs, workplace Health and Safety, Private Water Supplies, Contaminated Land, Animal Health & Welfare, and various licenses and permissions.
- 1.2 A chart of the management and service structure can be found in Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The purpose of these regulatory activities is to meet the Council's objectives for ensuring the safety of our community, protecting the environment, and ensuring a prosperous economy. These teams are also required to comply with certain statutory enforcement duties placed on the Council. Several elements of the Service's work are determined and monitored by national bodies such as Food Standards Scotland, the Health & Safety Executive and the Drinking Water Quality Regulator.
- 1.4 These regulatory activities are part of the overall public protection response of Community Planning partners, dealing principally with hazards presented by physical and environmental factors.
- 1.5 Regulation is an important part of the context within which businesses operate, and people co-exist. Effective and well-targeted regulation by the Council plays an important role in ensuring the economic well-being of Perth and Kinross by protecting the vulnerable and the environment. This includes promoting equality, helping raise the standards of service, providing the platform for fair competition and giving reassurance to consumers and businesses alike. As such, regulation is an enabler to economic activity.

- 1.6 To illustrate the range of activities covered by Regulatory Services, the following represents some of the main activities of the teams during 2014/15. In addition to these activities, the teams were heavily involved in the planning and monitoring of legal compliance at major events throughout Perth and Kinross in 2014/15 including the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay, Scottish Game Fair, T in the Park, Rewind Festival and the 2014 Ryder Cup and Junior Ryder Cup. A high level of resource was dedicated to these additional activities which, although highly demanding on team capacity, nevertheless proved to be rewarding. The team were able to play an active part in enhancing the global reputation and perception of Perth and Kinross, as well as contributing to the economic wellbeing of the area.

Trading Standards

- 1.7 The Trading Standards team is responsible for enforcement of a wide range of consumer protection legislation including fair trading, weights and measures and product safety. The aim of the service is to safeguard consumers, particularly vulnerable groups, and business interests, by promoting a fair, safe and healthy trading environment for the benefit of communities.
- 1.8 Since April 2012, the national service - Citizens Advice Consumer Service (CACS) has dealt with all first tier consumer complaints via their dedicated hotline. Our Trading Standards team deals with criminal allegations and complex complaints requiring officer input and investigation. In 14/15, a total of 1,860 enquiries were received by CACS from consumers in Perth and Kinross. This was a decrease of 407 or 18% in 13/14. However, of those received, 180 required further investigation by our staff (compared to 125, an increase of 44% in 13/14). The remainder were reviewed by the team to assess any need for further action. Increasingly, officers must also extract any relevant intelligence from these enquiries for submission to the Memex database. (This is the national intelligence database operated by Trading Standards Scotland which is used to collate information on cross boundary consumer protection concerns).
- 1.9 In terms of responding to enquiries, service requests and routine inspection activities, the team dealt with the following in 2014/15:
- 126 requests for assistance/advice from businesses (an increase on the previous year's total of 109)
 - 180 Consumer complaints (an increase on last years total of 125)
 - 596 visits to trader premises to inspect / offer advice (an increase on last years total of 532) including 36 inspections of filling stations for petroleum safety
 - Weights & Measures Testing - calibration checks were carried out on 171 petrol meters (decrease on last year's total of 192), 47 weighbridge tests and 76 weighing machines (an increase on last year's total of 32 and 27 respectively).

- 1.10 The perpetrators of "scams" (e.g. fraudulent schemes to extract money for non-existent services or financial opportunities) tend to target vulnerable individuals in our communities. To help those chronic victims of scams, the team signed up to the National Scams Hub Project in December 2013. This project, based in East Sussex Trading Standards, uses various sources of intelligence to identify individuals who are being targeted by scam mail. Details of 111 potential victims identified by the East Sussex project as residing in Perth and Kinross were referred to the team in 14/15. Working in partnership, Police Scotland and the Council's Social Work Services and Adult Protection teams contacted each of the individuals identified to help prevent them suffering from the kind of financial abuse and distress that the perpetrators of scams cause. Around 65% of those contacted were found to be receiving scam mail, but were not responding to it. Most recipients found these mailings annoying and were pleased to receive advice and information on how to deal with them. Of the 35% of those found to be victims of scam mail, there was a wide range of losses identified. Those who had only replied to one or two scams had lost only £30-£40. However, those who had become chronic scam victims were sending hundreds of pounds away each month with one victim's losses estimated to be in excess of £90,000 whilst another had sent in excess of £50,000 to fake lotteries and clairvoyants since 2006.
- 1.11 Nuisance telephone sales calls are a common irritant, however they are a serious problem for older and vulnerable consumers. They may be confused by telemarketing calls that they receive, agree to buy products they don't want to, unwittingly change their utility providers, and are therefore open to being taken advantage of by unscrupulous sales people and scammers. In 2014/15, Trading Standards took part in a trial which saw the installation of 10 telephone call blocking devices in the homes of vulnerable people in the area. The units performed extremely well and are effectively blocking all but genuine calls from friends, relatives and other agencies the resident actually wanted to speak to. In one case, on the first day a call blocking device was set up on a scam victim's phone, the unit rejected 24 international/scam calls in 2 hours. The device has been in place since July, and to date 97% of calls are rejected. The project, which was originally facilitated by CoSLA funding, has been hugely successful. The team is investigating the possibility of rolling the project out across those assessed by the team as being most vulnerable. The team is currently exploring additional funding.
- 1.12 During 2014/2015, the team gave 10 Scams Awareness Training sessions to 218 carers of vulnerable adults, with a further 18 Scams Awareness presentations to 484 members of various community groups. This saw an increase on last year with 164 carers and 446 various community group members receiving the awareness presentation. Briefings were also carried out to Post Office workers and Scottish Fire and Rescue personnel.
- 1.13 New Psychoactive Substances (NPS - sometimes called 'legal highs') are becoming a product readily available from both the internet and retail outlets. NPS mimic the effects of illegal drugs, but are outwith the control of the Misuse of Drugs Act. Joint visits with Police Scotland were carried out on premises in Perth, with advice given to the traders. At this time, no contraventions of any legislation enforced by Trading Standards were established. New legislation is due to be brought in next year to ban the sale of all NPS from retail shop outlets.

- 1.14 The team also continually examine the internet to identify online traders operating from Perth and Kinross. Advice is given, where appropriate, to locally based businesses regarding online trading and specific requirements such as Weights and Measures, Safety, Pricing, and Trade Descriptions. This helps ensure these businesses are meeting relevant safety and consumer protection requirements. The team has also identified an increase in the number of problems (via complaints and investigation) linked with sales through Gumtree, Facebook and similar sites. Examples of breaches in consumer legislation found by the team include lack of cancellation rights, contract information, fake goods and product safety issues.
- 1.15 The team have increased liaison with other trading standards services across the UK via Memex, the secure intelligence sharing database. Information gained is now being used to alert consumers and local businesses of scams and rogue traders operating in the area. 109 intelligence logs have been submitted to the Memex system in 2014/15, (63 relating to scams/rogue traders). Officers are also increasingly able to interrogate that system to obtain information about rogue traders which may affect consumers in Perth and Kinross. An example was a works van advertising tarring of driveways which had been spotted within Perth inappropriately displaying the logo belonging to BEAR Scotland. On investigation, the registered office was found to be within a flat above a hot food takeaway in the North of England with a base address in Fife.

Animal Welfare

- 1.16 The Animal Welfare team was formed in 2012 by combining the activities of the existing animal health officer and dog control officers to increase the capacity available to enforce both animal health and dog control legislation.
- 1.17 In 2014/15 the team dealt with 2,500 customer enquiries including:
- 470 dog fouling complaints (compared to 556 in 13/14)
 - 235 enquiries about stray dogs (compared to 206 in 13/14)
 - 179 complaints regarding barking dogs (compared to 161 in 13/14)
 - 4 dangerous dog notifications (compared to 3 in 13/14) and 150 notifications (compared to 63 in 13/14) requiring investigation under Control of Dogs legislation
 - 10 Dog Control notices were served (compared to 7 in 13/14). 'Dangerous dogs' are classed as such where there is deemed to be an imminent risk and as such response must be immediate.
 - Service of 6 Fixed Penalty Notices (same as last year's figures) for fouling offences and 26 written warnings where insufficient evidence was available to serve notices.
 - 109 requests for dog waste bins (compared to 71 in 13/14).
 - 44 talks to schools under the 'Safe and Sound Scheme' which teaches children appropriate techniques, to be safe around dogs
 - 305 service requests related to livestock

- 1.18 The team continued their strategy to tackle the problem of dog fouling (Report No 13/419 refers). The campaign of 'If They Don't Bin It - Drop Them In It' is seeking to encourage those affected by fouling their area to assist the enforcement officers, by providing as much information as possible to help identify the offenders, and target "hot spot" areas identified via public complaints. 5 areas were targeted in the 2014 period.
- 1.19 Although relatively little information has been received so far about specific offenders, the initiative has been well received by the public in areas receiving the increased attention. The approach appears to have at least a temporary effect, by reducing the complaint levels in the targeted area. It is noted that the number of dog fouling complaints has decreased by 18%, from the previous year.
- 1.20 This participation from the public is vital. Without specific 'intelligence', it is extremely difficult, time-consuming and costly for enforcement officers to ensure that they can be in the correct place at the correct time to catch an unidentified offender 'in the act' of allowing their dog to foul our streets and parks.
- 1.21 Following training and supply of equipment from the Dogs' Trust, officers are now able to carry out free microchipping of dogs at the various events they attend. During 2014/15, the officers chipped 70 dogs. Microchipping is a permanent way of identifying dogs and is encouraging dog owners to have their dogs chipped, before it becomes a mandatory requirement.
- 1.22 The team continued to investigate the escape of a number of wild boar from a licensed Dangerous Wild Animals premises in 2013/14. Following a warning being issued to the licence holder that further breaches could jeopardise future licence applications, the licence holder did not re-apply. However, another person applied to keep wild boar at the same premises. This application was refused by the Licensing Committee based on a report from the Animal Welfare officers. The applicant has appealed that decision and a court hearing has been set for September 2015.

Food Safety

- 1.23 The Food Safety team is responsible for the delivery of a Food Law enforcement service. This service has to meet the requirements of Food Standards Scotland's Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement to protect and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of communities. This team's remit covers all aspects of food hygiene and food standards legislation as well as investigating food poisoning and communicable diseases.
- 1.24 Food hygiene inspections continue to be targeted at implementing Food Standard Scotland's Guidance on E Coli 0157 — Control of Cross Contamination which is resulting in longer than normal inspection times. Prioritised inspections are targeted at those businesses which pose the greatest contamination risk, due to the handling of raw meat and vegetables alongside ready to eat foods. In 2014/15, the activities of the team included:

- 515 programmed food hygiene visits to food businesses (compared to 435 in 13/14), to ensure the safety and quality of the food served to the public, of which 173 (compared to 164 in 13/14) inspections generated a revisit to ensure improvements in hygiene standards
 - 16 inspections resulted in the service of enforcement notices (compared to 8 in 13/14)
 - 6 inspections resulted in legal closure by way of Remedial Action Notices (compared to 5 in 13/14) until hygiene standards were improved.
 - 98% of food businesses were accredited as a Pass (i.e. Satisfactory) on the publicly available Food Hygiene Information Scheme. Perth and Kinross businesses have the second highest pass rate in Scotland.
- 1.25 616 programmed food standards inspections were carried out (compared to 384 in 13/14) to examine compliance with compositional requirements and labelling of foodstuffs. A total of 341 food samples were submitted for microbiological examination or chemical analysis. These gave the following results:
- 18 out of 147 food samples submitted for chemical analysis were unsatisfactory (for compositional or labelling reasons)
 - 55 out of 194 food samples submitted for microbiological examination breached recommended guideline figures for microbial levels (due to unhygienic handling or inadequate temperature control).
- 1.26 The inspection and sampling for food standards, such as microbiological conditions helps protect the public against bacterial contamination and the inadvertent consumption of that bacteria, which could result in major public health incidents.
- 1.27 All unsatisfactory samples were investigated and the necessary improvements were actioned by the businesses concerned.
- 1.28 The team also worked closely with NHS Tayside to carry out 62 infectious disease investigations (based on notifications from the Consultant in Public Health Medicine's office) to identify likely causes of infection, and manage the potential risk of spread of disease, for infections such as Salmonella, E Coli 0157, Dysentery and Cryptosporidium.
- 1.29 The Food Safety team gained the UK Government's Customer Service Excellence Award for the 16th consecutive year in June 2015. The Customer Service Excellence operates on three levels:
- As a driver of continuous improvement, in relation to customer focussed service delivery, identifying areas and methods for improvement;
 - As a skills development tool by allowing individuals and teams to acquire new skills in the area of customer focus and customer engagement
 - As an independent validation of achievement by allowing organisations to seek formal accreditation to the Customer Service Excellence Standard. The team received no "partial compliances" or "non compliances" against the 57 elements of the award criteria, and were deemed as achieving 'compliance plus' in four areas, for achieving customer service beyond the standard.

- 1.30 The Food Safety Team has also launched an initiative to help meet Scottish national obesity targets. The Committed to Healthier Choices project offers food premises within Perth and Kinross support and advice on realistic ways of reducing the amount of fat, salt and sugar in meals they provide. This support has been offered in recognition of the fact that eating out plays an important and increasing part in people's lives. As such, the food service sector has great potential for making healthier food choices an easy option for their customers. The aim of the project is to encourage small step changes towards improving access to healthier food.
- 1.31 Some examples of these small steps include using lower fat alternatives in milk, butter and yoghurt which is added to foods, or by ensuring oil is heated to 175°C for deep fat fryers which helps to reduce the amount of fat which is absorbed by fried foods. Businesses participating require to sign up to at least seven commitments for reducing the salt, sugar or fat levels in meals that they provide. Prior to the project, samples of popular takeaway meals were taken for analysis for salt, fat and sugar content. This revealed that certain takeaway meals from premises within Perth and Kinross contained in excess of 180% Guidance Daily Amount (GDA) saturated fat for a female as well as being in excess of Government guidelines regarding salt and sugar. One year into the project, samples taken from the same premises have indicated a decrease in salt and sugar but an increase in saturated fat. These results display an initial success regarding salt and sugar and the team will now have the opportunity to focus on the reduction of fat in the next 12 months.

Health and Safety Enforcement

- 1.32 This team is responsible for ensuring the safety of employees and customers, by enforcing the Health and Safety at Work Etc Act in sector specific workplaces according to perceived risks based on data provided by the Health and Safety Executive.
- 1.33 The team carried out 155 risk based inspections of work premises of which:
- 51 were targeted at premises in respect of Legionella controls in water systems e.g. spas, swimming pools
 - 10 were targeted at nail bars in relation to musculoskeletal injuries, and health risks from the use of acrylic nail products
 - 8 were targeted at prevention of falls in bars with underground cellars and,
 - 51 were targeted at asbestos controls in older buildings
- 1.34 The work of the Health and Safety team helps to protect the wellbeing of employees, customers and the economic viability of businesses as the financial/reputational costs of accidents and occupational ill health can be considerable.

- 1.35 In 2012/13, there were 6,708 reported injuries to employees in Scotland resulting in the loss of 1.7 million working days. Of those injuries 22 were fatally injured, 1,843 sustained major injuries and 4,853 sustained injuries that compelled them to be absent from work for more than 7 days. In Perth and Kinross in 2014/15, there were no fatal accidents, 32 major injuries and 34 "over 7 day" injuries reported to the Health and Safety Team.
- 1.36 Within Perth and Kinross, the team dealt with 146 enquiries on work safety related topics, e.g. workplace hygiene, LPG safety, electrical testing etc and investigated 21 workplaces in connection with the notification of accidents.

Environmental Health

- 1.37 The Environmental Health team aim is to deliver an Environmental Health enforcement service to improve and maintain the health and wellbeing of the communities in Perth and Kinross through action on the physical environment and people's life circumstances:
- During 2014/15, 694 planning application consultations were examined and commented on compared to 766 in 2013/14 by the team. This is to prevent or minimise the potential for future environmental nuisance. Aspects of potential nuisance considered included: noise and vibration, or air pollution issues, in addition to potential issues with contaminated land, private water supplies or dust annoyance.
 - 177 pest control complaints and enquiries were received, resulting in 76 requests for remedial action (predominantly in respect of rat or mouse infestations) to be carried out by the Council's pest control contractor.
 - 1,867 service requests were dealt with in relation to disrepair, dampness and other conditions in relation to private housing conditions, public health concerns about drainage and refuse, smoke complaints, noise nuisance and housing grants for disabled adaptations. This compares to 1,774 for the previous year.
 - 43 funerals were organised and funded in terms of the National Assistance Act 1948 (an increase of 38% on the previous year). It is the duty of the Council to make and fund such arrangements where the deceased person does not have family, friends or sufficient funding to organise a burial or cremation for that person. This significant increase is currently being investigated to better understand the reasons for this change.
 - Disabled adaptations — 174 properties were adapted to meet the needs of disabled residents, through £830,000 through the Council's Private Sector Housing Grant scheme. In addition, grant funding of £68,669 was processed in respect of the improvement of 5 properties through the Empty Homes Initiative which provides owners of long term empty properties with a grant to help bring those properties up to the Repairing standard, specified by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, which lays down standards that must be met by private rented properties.

- A successful bid to the Scottish Government to implement air quality action plan measures for areas which have air quality management plans for Perth City and Crieff. This resulted in funding of £100,000 being granted. This enabled the instigation of various air quality initiatives, with approximately £37,000 being used for the promotion of walking and cycling to school in School Travel Plans. A further £63,000 was used to improve the frequency and routing of the Crieff town bus service providing a sustainable travel option serving central Crieff along with an upgrade of the bus stop facilities on Crieff High Street in the vicinity of James Square. On completion, these improvements will facilitate interchange between the various bus services that serve the High Street, by upgrading the boarding/alighting areas and installing larger disability compliant passenger waiting shelters.
- 16 temporary Gypsy/Traveller encampments were engaged by officers, (compared to 10 last year) the majority of which moved on informally within a reasonable time period.
- There are a number of examples of Environmental Health team involvement in high profile planning applications such as a change of use of land for the purpose of holding an annual music festival
- Erection of 166 dwelling houses West of Cherrybank Gardens, Perth, a hydroelectric scheme at Amulree
- Installation of a photovoltaic solar panel farm south east of Newburgh.

Land Quality (Contaminated Land)

- 1.38 The Land Quality team implements the Council's strategy to deal with the legacy of areas of land that may have, through their past use, become contaminated by virtue of the processes conducted on them. The Council has a statutory duty in terms of Part II A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to inspect its area to identify those sites that have the highest potential for causing harm to human health and the environment. Approximately 1,700 sites in Perth and Kinross have been risk assessed in order to apply a classification scheme for prioritisation. These sites are then dealt with as follows:
- Phase 1 — a detailed desktop study is carried out which looks at any archived information on the site's former uses, to form an assessment of the contamination potential.
 - Phase 2 — an invasive site investigation (trial pits, boreholes and sampling) is carried out to determine the presence, nature and extent of any contamination
 - Phase 3 — Where appropriate, remediation works are carried out to remove any threat to human health or the environment
- 1.39 In 2014/15, five Phase 1 reports were completed in terms of Part II A (Burnside Court Alyth, Huntingtower Bleachworks, Stormontfield Bleachworks, Cromwellport Beetling Mill and the former Inchcoonans landfill site) and a further two Phase 1 reports were carried out for Property Services (Rowanbank Nursery and Kinloch Rannoch former public toilets site). Of these seven, three were identified as medium-high priorities which will require a further Phase 2 investigation, as part of the team's future programme with the remaining four sites requiring no further action.

- 1.40 Phase 2 investigations were carried out at the former Newhouse landfill (park area behind Robertson Road, Western Edge) and Comrie gasworks. A total of seven boreholes have now been installed at the Newhouse site to allow an ongoing investigation into the potential for migration of landfill gases towards residential properties in the surrounding areas. Results to date do not give cause for any concerns, but monitoring will continue in 2015/16 to ensure that an appropriate evaluation has been carried out.
- 1.41 Three boreholes have been drilled at the former Comrie Gasworks site in sequence. Initial results show the presence of hydrocarbon contamination (tars etc). A full report will be prepared before any remediation proposals are confirmed. Based on the information available, it is considered at this time that the effect of any risks from the existing contamination are more likely to be to the local water environment rather than to human health or property.
- 1.42 Site investigation works at the former gasworks site in Charles Street, Perth, continued throughout 2014/15. Groundwater and ground gas sampling were carried out throughout the year, in addition to air sampling in nearby residential properties. No potential human health risks were identified as a result of these investigations. Ongoing groundwater sampling will determine the potential for migration of contaminants away from the site and a full report on the site investigations will be shared with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). Any proposals to mitigate groundwater contamination fall within SEPA's remit.
- 1.43 Following a site investigation at Gleneam Road, Perth, structural and ground contamination issues resulted in a decision to demolish six houses built on the former landfill site. Indoor air monitoring within the properties identified elevated levels of volatile substances which have the potential to cause harm to health. Given the findings on the Gleneam Road site, the investigation was extended to include properties at St Magdalenes Road. Investigation of ground conditions in this location identified similar contamination to that found at Gleneam Road. However, indoor air monitoring in five properties confirmed no traces of volatile substances. Risk Assessment and remediation proposals will be concluded during 2015/16.
- 1.44 A radiological survey around the East Pow burn adjacent to the Vector Aerospace site, Almondbank, was carried out as part of site preparation works for the Almondbank Flood Prevention scheme. Additional site investigations were also carried out at the insistence of SEPA in order to address a concern over the potential for possible solvent contamination of the area in question, to affect the local watercourse. The investigation works will be concluded in the early part of 2016.

Drinking Water Quality

- 1.45 The Private Water Team is responsible for duties detailed in legislation governing the quality of private water supplies. (i.e. supplies other than those provided by Scottish Water). As well as being a source of acute gastro - intestinal conditions (such as Campylobacter, Salmonella, E Coli 0157 and Cryptosporidium), long term consumption of water contaminated with harmful metals or minerals can cause chronic illness. Over 20% of the samples taken by the team fail to meet bacterial standards. Minimising sources of contamination and ensuring suitable disinfection treatment is fitted, protects the health and wellbeing of those people served by a private water supply.
- 1.46 There are over 1,500 private water supplies in Perth & Kinross. The Water Team has statutory duties for over 260 Type A supplies which serve commercial or public use premises or serve large numbers of dwellings (ie at least 20 houses); this protects visitors to the area as many of these supplies serve holiday accommodation. These supplies are subject to a mandatory annual sampling programme.
- 1.47 Public health is further enhanced by sampling and risk assessments carried out on 1,250 Type B private water supplies that serve domestic properties. These are not part of the statutory sampling programme. However, the team responds to requests from consumers for a number of reasons (concerns over water quality, suspected contamination, property sales etc).
- 1.48 Any owner or occupier of premises served by a private supply can apply to the Water Team to obtain Scottish Government funded grants to the value of up to £800 per property for improvements to their supply. The team have employed various methods of engaging with customers to inform them of available grants. Examples include promoting grant aid on the sides of Council vehicles, and posting notices on village notice boards.
- 1.49 In 2014/15 the team:
- carried out 5 risk assessments on new Type A (highest risk) supplies and 24 on Type B (smaller domestic) supplies
 - took statutory samples from 284 Type A supplies and a further 390 samples from Type B supplies
 - completed 38 grant applications to improve the quality of water supplies to over 129 properties, resulting in grant payments to local residents totalling over £102,972.
 - dealt with 634 enquiries from the public regarding water supplies.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The teams in Regulatory Services seek to improve their performance and impact, through development of their team plans. Key areas for activity during 2015/16 are as follows:

- Workforce Planning - The Council requires to have sufficient numbers of suitably qualified, professional staff to be authorised to carry out the variety of functions within Regulatory Services. This is to ensure that the Council fulfils its statutory duties appropriately, and to the satisfaction of regulators of our services, such as Scottish Government, Drinking Water Quality Regulator, Food Standards Scotland and the Health and Safety Executive.
- The 'grow your own' approach to workforce planning will continue to be supported. Currently there are 6 technical level officers within Regulatory Services working towards gaining the MSc in Environmental Health via a distance learning programme with the University of Derby. Successful completion of the MSc will give these officers the appropriate qualification to become an Environmental Health Officer. In addition, a Trading Standards Technician is studying for the Diploma in Consumer Affairs and Trading Standards via the Trading Standards Institute Academy, which will give the officer the appropriate qualification to become a Trading Standards Officer. These proactive steps will maximise the opportunity to recruit from within the organisation should professional vacancies arise.
- A new Modern Apprenticeship vocational qualification in Regulatory Services is in the early stages of development and has received 'in principle' support from the Society of Chief Officers for Environment Health in Scotland and from the Society of Chief Officers for Trading Standards in Scotland. The development of this qualification will assist both the Trading Standards and Environmental Health professions to recruit new candidates at an entry level. It may also be a route for other regulatory bodies to engage entry level enforcement staff and there may be the opportunity, in the future, to expand the scope of the qualification to include additional Council regulatory functions such as Planning, Building Control and Licensing.
- The consumer focussed approach of the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) team has now been rolled out to the Private Water and Trading Standards teams. This approach allows customer feedback to influence service delivery standards for the users benefit. The CSE approach to customer consultation will be implemented by the Environmental Health and Land Quality teams during 2015/16.
- A shared service initiative is being explored in partnership between Fife, Angus, Dundee and Perth and Kinross Councils. The project is currently exploring the possibility of shared procurement opportunities, access to specialist equipment and sharing of specially skilled officers. The project is at an advanced stage and a draft 'Minute of Agreement' will be discussed at the next meeting of the working group in October 2015.

- 2.2 Following the declaration of Crieff High Street as an Air Quality Management Area in February 2014 by the Environment Committee, the next stage of the legal process is the development of an Air Quality Action Plan to address the factors causing the exceedences in NO₂ and Particulates. This is normally progressed within 18 months of declaration of an AQMA. Works to progress the development of the Plan following publication of the AQMA were reprioritised in 2014/15 due to the added workload of the large number of major events involving Regulatory Services staff and the loss of key pollution staff in the Environmental Health team due to long term sickness absence and maternity leave.
- 2.3 The development of the AQAP is a key objective for Regulatory Services in 2015/16. The Council's air quality consultants will be modelling various scenarios to try to identify potential pollution reduction measures, prior to full public consultation on a future action, with a target date for the completion of a draft Plan set for the end of February 2016. A cross service working group from the Environment Service will be set up to devise the action plan proposals. In addition, work will be ongoing in relation to the Perth Air Quality Management Area, including the consideration of recently published Scottish Government guidance on creation of Low Emission Zones.
- 2.4 Trading Standards will continue to work with, and support, scam victims reported via the scam hub project and will seek to educate other organisations to identify potential scam victims for referral to the team.
- 2.5 Trading Standards, with other partners, will continue to explore what enforcement avenues may exist for the control of NPS. Partners will include Police Scotland, other Trading Standards Services (via the SCOTTS Safety Group), the Crown Office and substance misuse services. They will also closely follow the 'Guidance for Local Authorities on Taking Action Against 'Head Shops' Selling New Psychoactive Substances'. Trading Standards will also participate with the Scottish Government and UK Government Home Office NPS reviews and monitor any developments and guidance.
- 2.6 The Animal welfare team will continue to promote the "If they don't bin it — drop them in it" campaign against dog owners who don't pick up after their pets, by targeting offending "hot spots" as they are identified.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to:
- Endorse the activities of the Environment Service and Regulatory Services in protecting communities within Perth and Kinross.

Authors

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Robert Lyle	Principle Officer, Regulatory Services	E-mail RLyle@pkc.gov.uk Phone: 01738 476468
Jim Dixon	Regulatory Services Manager	E-mail JJDixon@pkc.gov.uk Phone: 01738 476471

Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Barbara Renton	Director (Environment)	29 September 2015

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes/None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This report contributes to the local outcomes of:

- (a) Our communities and people experiencing inequalities will have improved quality of life, life chances and health.
- (b) Our people will have improved health and wellbeing.
- (c) Our area will have a sustainable natural and built environment.

Corporate Plan

1.2 The Council's Corporate Plan 2013-2018 lays out five outcome focussed strategic objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resource allocation. They are as follows:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

- 1.3 This report contributes to objective (v).

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no workforce implications arising directly from this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications arising directly from this report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties. This report has been assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. In respect of this proposal no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. There are no sustainability issues associated within the proposals of this report.

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Risk

- 3.5 There are no corporate risks associated with the proposals contained within this report.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Legal Services and the Head of Democratic Services have been consulted on the content of this report and are in agreement with the proposals.

External

- 4.2 No external consultation was required in the preparation of this report.

5. Communication

- 5.1 Communication will be ongoing with relevant internal and external stakeholders.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to the Environment Committee in August 2013 entitled “Dog Fouling in Perth and Kinross, Report Number 13/419

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Regulatory Services Structure.

Regulatory Services Structure

