

SHEFFIELD TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE PLAN 2006-2007

Index of contents

	Pages
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2-3
SERVICE PLAN	
1.0 Quality System Requirements	4
1.1 Management Commitment	4
1.2 Customer Focus	5
1.3 Policy Statement	5
1.4 Planning	6
1.5 Responsibility, Authority and Communication	6
1.6 Management Review	6
1.7 Disclaimers	6
2.0 Review of recent performance	7-8
3.0 How Trading Standards links to community and corporate objectives	9-10
3.1 Community Objectives	9
3.2 Corporate Objectives	9-10
4.0 Summary of Consumer needs and expectations	10-11
5.0 Summary of Business needs and expectations	11
6.0 Planned activities to meet national and local priorities And help create 'informed confident consumers'	12-14
7.0 Planned activities to meet national and local priorities And help create 'informed successful businesses'	14-15
8.0 Plans for the enforcement of a fair and safe trading environment	15-17
9.0 Plans to ensure an efficient, effective and improving Trading Standards service	18-22
Annex A List of Operational Procedures	23
Annex B Organisational Chart	24
Annex C Work Programme	25-29
Annex D Enforcement Policy	30-37

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SHEFFIELD TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2006-2007

The Service Delivery Plan for Sheffield Trading Standards in conjunction with the associated work programme and enforcement policy, identifies the enforcement and advice responsibilities of the service.

The plan further details the aims of the service to undertake the statutory duty of the Council to enforce a wide range of legislation concerned with the regulation of trade practices. The purpose of this legislation is to protect consumers from fraudulent and unsafe trade practices and responsible businesses from unfair competition. This purpose is adopted by the Service as one of its principal aims:

- To promote and maintain a fair, equitable and safe trading environment.
- To encourage confident and knowledgeable consumers through the provision of advice, information and education.
- To promote and maintain the quality and competitiveness of goods and services produced by local business.

The above aims set out in the Service Delivery Plan will assist the Council to achieve its priorities of:

1. Building a network of strong, self-sufficient communities.
2. Securing safer, more confident communities.
3. Working in partnership with others to provide better services to the public.
4. Managing the Council's resources in a businesslike way.

The Service Plan and associated work programme details how we intend to achieve Corporate and Community objectives whilst taking account of the needs and expectations of local consumers and businesses. It includes provisions to:

- Increase public awareness of the service.
- Consult service users on their perception of and satisfaction with the service delivered.
- Provide advice and information to consumers by means of a free consumer advice service operated in partnership with Consumer Direct Yorkshire and the Humber, in addition to website information, guidance leaflets and media publicity.
- Promote awareness of the health and safety and anti social behaviour implications associated with sales of age restricted products and encourage compliance with legislation through the 'Responsible Retailer Scheme'.
- Carry out 'test purchase' exercises and take action against those who sell to underage children
- Continue the South Yorkshire Approved Motor Trader Scheme to improve standards of trade, and increase consumer confidence in this major market sector.

- Carry out compliance visits to trade premises and investigate complaints, in conjunction with targeted enforcement programmes involving inspection, sampling and testing of goods. In addition we will provide advice and guidance to businesses wherever possible.
- Provide a testing and verification service in relation to metrological equipment in support of local business.
- Develop formal relationships with businesses for which we act as home authority, to provide information and advice to assist them in successful development and compliance with legislation.
- Take action against individuals and businesses that flout the law or act irresponsibly, in line with our published enforcement policy.
- Be reactive to complaints relating to doorstep crime and introduce pilot 'no cold calling zones' to reduce the incidence of unsolicited traders and distraction burglary.
- To maintain a directory of vetted tradespeople for the benefit of the elderly and vulnerable.
- Participate in national and regional initiatives to develop and adopt best practice and maximise available resources by involvement in joint enforcement projects.

Throughout the plan there are details of how performance will be assessed, progress reported upon and potential improvements identified to enable delivery of a Quality Assured service in support of the Council's aim to be amongst the Best Performing Councils.

TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE PLAN 2006-2007

1.0 QUALITY SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

This Service Plan details:

- The structure and content of the ISO 9001:2000 systems, the levels of authority and responsibility of key personnel, the policy and objectives of the management systems in operation and how the requirements of that standard are met. Accordingly this document is also the Quality Policy Manual for the Sheffield Trading Standards service. This document also includes a list of the operational procedures that define the scope of the system.
- A review of recent performance
- Plans for the coming year with identified performance objectives and targets.

The Operations Manual contains the detailed instructions necessary to ensure that a consistent service is delivered in accordance with current policy and customer needs. The lists of operational procedures for Sheffield Trading Standards are provided at Annex A

Records provide evidence of service delivery and verification. They are identified in every procedure, indexed to the activity, stored safely and are readily retrievable to facilitate corrective action/analysis, as defined in the Control of Records procedure.

The various processes interact to ensure that all defined activities are undertaken in accordance with the appropriate quality standard.

1.1 Management Commitment

The Head of Environmental Regulation is committed to the development and implementation of the quality management systems outlined in this Service Plan and will continually improve the service by adopting and achieving the following objectives:

]

- Setting standards
- Being open and providing full information
- Consulting and involving
- Encouraging access and promotion of choice
- Treating all fairly
- Putting things right when they go wrong
- Using resources effectively

- Innovating and improving
- Working with other providers
- Providing user satisfaction

The commitment is embodied within the day to day operations as well as contained within the formal management system documentation

1.2 Customer Focus

The Head of Environmental Regulation ensures that customers are properly identified and defined and their requirements established.

Customer feedback is obtained through:

- Management and operational staff liaison with customers
- Customer Surveys
- Membership of appropriate service related bodies and groups

Additionally the Trading Standards service constantly reviews the information provided to customers to ensure that they are fully aware of:

- The range and scope of services provided
- How our services can be accessed and how we will respond to your request for service
- How feedback should be given, including how complaints should be made

This is achieved through:

- Clear and concise literature in plain English
- The Trading Standards web-site which can be accessed via the Council web-site
- Information provided on request

1.3 Policy Statement

The Trading Standards service is committed to:

- Sustain and improve the high quality of the services provided to customers based on professionalism, care, impartiality and public accountability.
- Providing documented assurance to Council Members and customers that the service is being provided in a consistent, professional, effective and efficient manner.
- Striving for continuous improvement in quality levels in order to reduce and eventually eliminate all errors from operations and any other internal activity.

To meet these objectives the Quality System outlined in this document is applied in accordance with the requirements of BS/EN/ISO 9001:2000. Conformance with the requirements of the detailed procedures outlined in this document is mandatory for all staff engaged in the provision of those services.

1.4 Planning

The objectives we are endeavouring to achieve and the way we have set about delivering those objectives are stated in the above sections of this Plan. The achievement of all these objectives is measured through performance monitoring, complaint analysis and corrective/preventative action procedures.

The work of Trading Standards is such that planning to meet new requirements is not a day to day function. Where new services or products are introduced, appropriate planning will take place via the regular Service Management Team Meetings. Changes will be introduced by a combination of competency training and documented procedures.

1.5 Responsibility, Authority and Communication

The inter-relationship of all personnel within Trading Standards who manage and perform activities affecting quality are detailed in the organisational chart at Annex B.

The duties, responsibilities and authority of those personnel are defined in individual job descriptions and are reflected in the documented procedures described in the operations manuals.

The Head of Environmental Regulation ensures that performance information is communicated to all staff through management team meetings and through regular staff meetings. Workforce development plans and individual performance targets are established through performance appraisals that cascade through the organisational structure from this plan.

1.6 Management Review

The continuing suitability and effectiveness of the BS/EN/ISO 9001:2000 system is verified by annual review attended by the Head of Environmental Regulation, the Quality Management Representative and nominated staff. A record, together with details of any recommendations for improvements to the system is maintained as a part of the system records.

1.7 Disclaimers

Design and Development: The statutory trading standards functions do not extend to providing consultancy or design services, therefore conformance with clause 7.3 of ISO 9001:2000 is excluded from those quality management systems.

- **Validation of Process for Production and Service Provision:** For Sheffield Trading Standards subsequent monitoring or measurement verifies service provision. Consequently the requirements of clause 7.5.2 ISO 9001:2000 do not apply to the current scope of the quality management system and are excluded.

2.0 REVIEW OF RECENT PERFORMANCE

Over the past 12 months, in partnership with Consumer Direct Yorkshire and the Humber, we have dealt with 7594 consumer enquiries, where appropriate carrying out investigations in respect of unfair or illegal trading practices.

We have met our targets for inspecting trade premises categorised as High Risk, giving advice and assistance to help businesses meet their legal obligations and promote best practice. Where businesses were found not to be compliant, we have endeavoured to ensure that appropriate action has been taken, resulting in 97.1% of high risk premises visited being brought to a state of compliance.

We have met our targets for inspection of weighing and measuring equipment on industrial premises and tested the majority of petrol pumps for accuracy. With the consent of forecourt owners, we have placed calibration stickers on petrol pumps to indicate they have been tested to increase customer confidence in their accuracy.

We have provided a verification service to manufacturers and repairers of weighing and measuring equipment in use for trade, meeting our target response times in all instances. By providing a flexible and reactive service we have assisted local businesses to meet production deadlines and remain competitive.

In addition to programmed premise inspections we have carried out surveys and enforcement exercises looking at specific trade practices and products. Where possible these have been carried out in cooperation with other South Yorkshire and Yorkshire and the Humber authorities to maximise effectiveness. Areas addressed include:-

- Accuracy and availability of holidays advertised by travel agents.
- Credit advertising and payment methods
- Accuracy of claims relating to qualifications and approvals in trade advertisements
- Safety of secondhand vehicles for sale from dealers forecourts.
- Adulteration and substitution of branded spirits and mixer syrups
- Safety of new & secondhand cycles
- Safety of secondhand tyres offered for sale
- Accuracy of airline tyre pressure gauges on forecourts and service bays.
- Measurement of spirits in clubs and cocktail bars.
- Nutritional values of school meals
- Safety of Nursery Products
- Safety of Nightwear (flammability etc)
- Colouring in takeaway meals
- Contamination of foods (presence of Aflatoxins and illegal dyes such as Sudan1)

97.4% of all businesses inspected were brought to a state of full compliance within the year, in most cases without the need to resort to legal action.

There have been 39 instances where, as a result of infringements discovered during routine inspections or investigations in pursuance of complaints received, we have

instigated prosecutions, issued formal cautions, or taken action under part 8 of the Enterprise Act in line with our enforcement policy. These included 12 instances relating to underage sales (tobacco, fireworks, aerosol paints and alcohol) 8 to misdescribed goods or services (property description, building work, gas safety, transport hire, cattle description, holiday description, professional qualification, classification of video recording), 6 to counterfeit goods (including handbags, clothing, vodka), 6 to adulteration or substitution in relation to branded spirits, 2 to short measure (whisky, animal feed), 2 to overloading of vehicles, 1 in relation to sales of part worn tyres, 1 to false medical claims and 1 to non compliance with business names requirements,.

The level of sales of age restricted products to underage children continues to be a concern. Our experiences in our own test purchasing exercises and combined exercises with SY Police in connection with the national Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign show that further work is needed in this area. Roll out of the 'Responsible Retailer' award scheme, aimed at increasing business and consumer awareness of the health and safety and anti social behaviour implications of underage sales has resulted in a total of 358 businesses now being formally endorsed by the scheme. We have utilised poster competitions in schools and media displays at sports events to raise awareness of the safety and nuisance problems associated with misuse of fireworks.

We have carried out specific training to businesses in respect of distance selling and business rights as well as general business education on legislation administered by the service and the range of advice and guidance available from the service. This has been carried out in cooperation with the Approved Motor trade Partnership Scheme, Business Link and the Chamber of Commerce 'Black Minority Ethnic' business forum.

Further training, relating to civil and criminal legislation, has been delivered to our partners in the Consumer Support Network to assist them in resolution of consumer complaints and recognition of potential offences.

To raise consumer awareness of current issues, scams, unsafe products, misleading trade practices etc. we have issued press releases, contributed to local radio consumer spots, attended local shows and events, produced a twice yearly newsletter distributed to elected members, magistrates and trade organisations, as well as waiting areas such as doctors/dentists/hospitals/libraries. . We delivered 42 such information events in addition to a seminar aimed at engaging community groups, council and external agencies in the recognition and prevention of doorstep crime and distraction burglary.

We have carried out our duties in line with our published enforcement policy and achieved a score of 98.75% in relation to the performance indicator BV166 which measures achievement against a checklist of enforcement best practice.

We have continued to operate a Quality Management System to ISO 9001-2000 which has been independently audited by BSI.

In addition we have carried out a self assessment evaluation of our service and been subject to peer review by a team consisting of Trading Standards professionals and an IdeA (Improvement & Development Agency) assessor.

3.0 HOW TRADING STANDARDS LINKS TO COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

3.1

Community Objective	Areas of Trading Standards work developed from objective
Combat social exclusion	Provision of consumer advice and education. Action to raise awareness of issues relating to doorstep crime, particularly with regard to the elderly and vulnerable.
Reduce crime and disorder	Investigation of reported consumer fraud and product counterfeiting. Trader compliance visits and targeted enforcement programmes to reduce levels of consumer fraud and protect the vulnerable.
Creation of a better local environment	Implementation of responsible retailer scheme involving underage sales enforcement and promotion of safe and responsible use of fireworks and other dangerous products, contributing to reduction in anti-social behaviour. Checking energy efficiency compliance of white goods. Recycling of paper and seized counterfeit goods.
Improving standards of public health and safety	Product safety and food standards enforcement and sampling programmes. Education and awareness programmes involving schools and local communities in relation to tobacco, alcohol, fireworks and other age restricted products
Community Objective	Areas of Trading Standards work developed from objective
Business and employment development	Provision of business advice, technical and legal information both on request and in conjunction with programmed inspection visits and as part of home authority agreements with local businesses. Provision of comprehensive and cost effective metrological services.

3.2

Corporate Objective	Areas of Trading Standards work developed from objective
A modern customer focussed council committed to working in partnership and improving access to services	Services are accessible by phone, personal visit and internet and publicised in widely available literature and media exposure. The service is an active partner in the delivery of Regional 'Consumer Direct' project for Yorkshire and the Humber and is the major developer and administrator of the local Consumer Support Network
A Best Performing Council	ISO 9001 2000 quality managed service. I.I.P. accredited. Committed to continuous improvement, monitoring and performance management. Plans to achieve Charter Mark within the coming year.

Corporate Objective	Areas of Trading Standards work developed from objective
Sound financial management	Service is managed within available budget and prioritised to deliver best value.
<p>Creating a successful Sheffield</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thriving and competitive city. • Successful neighbourhoods ('Closing the Gap' between deprived and advantaged areas) • High levels of learning and achievement • Good services for the protection and care of those in need • A Cleaner, Greener, Safer Sheffield • Aid economic regeneration 	<p>Compliance visits to traders to secure common high standards of trade and goods, with targeted enforcement in respect of food standards and unsafe products. Provision of full range of metrological functions including Notified Body verifications.</p> <p>Provision of business education and advice, both on a 'home authority' basis and via the creation of business partnerships</p> <p>Provision of consumer advice and active participation in Consumer Support Network to empower the less able in the community.</p> <p>Consumer education via community groups and use of media.</p> <p>Development of community and business partnerships. Proactive approach to combat underage sales and promotion of smoke free environments. Contributes to reduction in anti-social behaviour, litter and nuisance. .</p> <p>Raise awareness of issues relating to doorstep crime amongst the elderly and vulnerable.</p> <p>Investigate complaints relating to unsafe consumer goods</p> <p>Improving access to legal and technical advice, promotion of calibration and metrological services.</p> <p>Development of business partnerships to encourage confidence in local products and services.</p>

4.0 SUMMARY OF CONSUMER NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS

- Continuing demand for free advice service accessible by telephone, letter, e-mail and personal callers.
- Continuing demand for information and guidance materials to assist self help in dealing with consumer transactions.
- Consumer Direct national data, and profile of local enquiries received, identify areas of trade and consumer goods which give rise to most complaints. Motor trade related enquiries remain a major factor.
- Local and national focus on crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour support need for continuing education and enforcement work related to underage sales.
- .Local support for 'cleaner greener safer' city drives the need for enforcement of product standards legislation in the areas of unsafe consumer goods, food standards, ECO labelling of domestic electrical products and control of excessive and recyclable packaging.
- Increasing concerns over effects of doorstep crime, particularly relating to the old and vulnerable show the need for increasing the levels of awareness

within vulnerable groups and related agencies. Additionally there is a need to promote and assist the selection of reliable tradespeople to vulnerable groups.

- Survey results among random sample of consumers shows high level of importance attached to enforcement of mainstream Trading Standards legislation..

5.0 SUMMARY OF BUSINESS NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS

- Continuing demand for freely available technical information and advice on legislation relating to metrological, product standards and fair trading issues via personal contact, telephone, guidance notes and website information.
- Feedback from 'responsible retailer' and 'approved trader' schemes shows demand for compliance visits backed up by enforcement action against offenders.
- Demand for training and educational events in relation to new legislation and areas of perceived difficulty within specific trade sectors.
- Feedback from 'approved trader' schemes shows high degree of satisfaction from members and the public and encourages expansion of such schemes.
- Business users show high level of satisfaction with service provided and conduct of compliance visits.
- Users of verification service appreciate flexible approach and quick response to requests for service.

6.0 PLANNED ACTIVITIES TO MEET NATIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES AND HELP CREATE 'INFORMED CONFIDENT CONSUMERS'.

Planned activity	Reason / link to objectives
To provide easily accessible one to one advice to consumers. Service provided to Community Legal Service accredited standard in partnership with Consumer Direct Yorkshire and the Humber. Service available by telephone, e-mail post and to personal callers.	Reflects the demand for the service and feedback from 'user' and 'awareness' surveys. Combats social exclusion by improving levels of consumer education and advice. Partnership working and improved access to services in line with modern customer focussed council.
Supply guidance leaflets and 'self help' packs on request and maintain a website containing current advice and information.	'Closes the Gap' by enabling the disadvantaged.
To provide help and assistance in the resolution of consumer enquiries and disputes and undertake investigations in respect of cases of unfair or illegal trade practices	Reduces levels of consumer crime and fraud.
To take a lead role in the organisation of the local Consumer Support Network and provide training sessions to external advice providers within the CSN partnership	Partnership working and improved access to services in line with modern customer focussed council. Contributes to successful neighbourhoods through local people and organisations working together.
Increase levels of Consumer education by; 1) Use of regular local radio consumer spot. 2) Active website with guidance and information leaflets and links to other consumer information sites. 3) Information dissemination via Consumer Support Network. 4) Raise awareness through schools and community groups in relation to consumer issues and the safety and health issues associated with age restricted products (tobacco, alcohol, solvents, fireworks etc). Promote and administer 'Responsible Retailer' scheme 5) Generation of press releases in relation to matters of consumer safety and unfair trading practices / scams.	Reflects the demand for the service and feedback from 'user' and 'awareness' surveys. Combats social exclusion by improving levels of consumer education and advice. 'Closes the Gap' by enabling the disadvantaged. Wider empowerment of the community to help themselves. Contributes to reduction in anti social behaviour in conjunction with underage sales enforcement activities. Supported by local Health Authority Reduces levels of consumer crime and fraud by increasing public awareness.

Planned activity	Reason / link to objectives
6) Production of twice yearly newsletter in conjunction with other South Yorkshire authorities to raise awareness of consumer issues and service availability	Partnership working and improved access to services in line with modern customer focussed council. Improving levels of learning and attainment.
Promote and administer 'Responsible Retailer' scheme involving talks and presentations to community groups and schools. The scheme focuses on sales of age-restricted products, with newsletter circulated to scheme members and community groups to maintain awareness and advise of legal developments.	Contributes to successful neighbourhoods through local people and organisations working together and impacts on levels of anti-social behaviour.
Promote the introduction of 'No Cold Calling Zones' to combat rogue traders and unfair trading practices in relation to elderly and vulnerable consumers.	Contributes to successful neighbourhoods by raising community awareness and reducing instances of doorstep crime.
Compile and promote a 'Home Services Directory' of vetted traders/businesses	Contributes to a thriving and competitive city by support of competent traders and good trading practices. Meets consumer need (particularly the elderly and vulnerable) for assistance in selecting a reputable trader.
Proactive educational programme in conjunction with Police and Fire Service in relation to fireworks safety. Involves co-operation with schools, community groups and local sports venues (including 'on screen' promotional material at football matches etc.).	Contributes to 'successful neighbourhoods' and 'cleaner greener, safer' objectives. Aims to continue reduction in injuries to children and maintain the improvements achieved in reducing noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour.
Promote the 'Motor Trade Partnership' scheme by provision of point of sale information and related media events and dedicated website facility. Continue to monitor and audit scheme members to ensure compliance with fair trading principles. This initiative delivered in co-operation with the other South Yorkshire authorities.	Contributes to a thriving and competitive city by support of competent traders and good trading practices. Increases consumer confidence and reduces level of complaints related to scheme members.

Planned activity	Reason / link to objectives
Contribute to the preparation, production and issue of advice and educational materials in co-operation with South Yorkshire and Yorkshire and the Humber Trading Standards groups.	In pursuit of National and local priority to create informed confident consumers and successful businesses.
Carry out user and non-user surveys to measure satisfaction and awareness levels and identify areas for potential service improvement.	Supporting aim to be a best performing council which is modern and customer focussed.

7.0 PLANNED ACTIVITIES TO MEET NATIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES AND HELP CREATE 'INFORMED SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSES'.

Planned activity	Reason / link to objectives
Service accessible via telephone, post, personal contact, internet and e-mail with guidance and advice leaflets freely available online or by post on request. Prompt response to all requests for advice from businesses in addition to advice and guidance offered in conjunction with programmed compliance visits. We will continue to provide specific business advice and guidance to businesses for whom we act as Home Authority and invite comments on our enforcement policy. We will encourage such businesses to sign up to formal Home Authority Agreements.	Compliance visit follow up surveys and officer feedback indicate demand for service. Supportive of aim to be a modern customer focussed council supportive of business and employment development and creation of a thriving and competitive city. Aids economic regeneration by improving access to relevant legal and technical advice enabling better quality of products and trade practices.
Continuing roll out of Responsible Retailer scheme (in co-operation with Local Health Authority) including advice and educational events to business.	Contributes to reduction in underage sales and reduction in anti social behaviour. Supportive of local business and encourages community involvement.
Continuing expansion of Motor Trade Partnership scheme (in conjunction with other South Yorkshire authorities) with associated educational seminars. Exit questionnaires to gauge satisfaction with seminars.	To improve and maintain standards in this sector of trade which has been historically problematic. To provide information and advice to enable compliance with legislation and increase customer confidence in local businesses.
We will deliver training sessions to trade sectors where there is a high level of consumer complaint history and also in response to trade requests for clarification on existing and new legislation	Supportive of aim to be a modern customer focussed council supportive of business and employment development and creation of a thriving and competitive city.

Planned activity	Reason / link to objectives
We will seek to develop a business forum to ascertain business views and training/information requirements relative to this and other Environmental Regulation services	To identify areas where the service can further assist existing and new businesses.
We will disseminate information to relevant businesses in response to hazard warnings received from government agencies. Additionally we will maintain links from our website to government agencies and other sources of business advice.	To enable businesses to identify, and where appropriate remove from sale items which may be unsafe or detrimental to health, thus allowing them to contribute to the 'cleaner, greener, safer' agenda.
We will continue to consult business users in relation to satisfaction with the way we deliver our service, including the accessibility of the service. This will be by means of postal questionnaires and our website 'your views' facility	To enable us to assess our customers needs and expectations and identify areas for improvement

8.0 PLANS FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF A FAIR AND SAFE TRADING ENVIRONMENT

Planned Activity	Reason/ Links to objectives
As a result of intelligence gathered from consumer enquiries, enforcement projects and compliance visits, we will undertake investigations in respect of unfair and illegal trading practices and breaches of delegated legislation. In appropriate cases we will initiate prosecutions having regard to our enforcement policy, which is compliant with the Enforcement Concordat and Code of Crown Prosecutors.	Feedback via Motor Trade and Responsible Retailer scheme members shows demand for enforcement action to create a 'level playing field'. Contributes to reduction in crime and disorder, creation of a better local environment, improved standards of public health and safety and creation of a successful Sheffield by supporting compliant traders.
In accordance with 'Home Authority' principles, we will provide technical and legal advice to businesses based within our area. We will take up complaints and carry out investigations relating to home authority businesses and where there is a wider regulatory interest, refer to other agencies. We will continue to seek formal agreements with our Home Authority businesses, defining levels of commitment from both sides and inviting comment on our enforcement policy We will seek to increase our score in relation to BV 166 (indicator of enforcement best practice) to 100%.	Emphasises our desire to work in partnership with businesses. Contributes to a thriving and competitive city and aids business and employment development by improving access to legal and technical advice. Promotes compliance with legal requirements, thus reducing levels of consumer crime and fraud and improving quality and safety of consumer products.

Planned Activity	Reason/ Links to objectives
<p>All premises are risk assessed in accordance with LACORS guidelines and compliance visits are programmed accordingly. Enforcement programmes are planned having regard to national and local trends in consumer complaints and incorporating areas of work identified by South Yorkshire, and Yorkshire and the Humber co-ordinating groups.</p> <p>We plan to visit 95% of high risk premises and up to 47.5% of medium risk premises within the next year, including visits to manufacturers and importers where product safety, food standards and average weight legislation applies. We will carry out follow up visits to ensure that 95% of all premises visited are brought to a state of full compliance within the next year.</p>	<p>To ensure best use of available resources and comply with national guidelines on visit frequencies.</p> <p>To ensure compliance levels for local businesses are among the best in the country and to assist local businesses to adopt best practice by providing advice and guidance through this personal contact with professional officers.</p>
<p>We will carry out sampling of foods to check compliance with food standards legislation and sampling of other products to check for compliance with product safety legislation.</p> <p>We will participate in South Yorkshire, Yorkshire & the Humber and Food Standards Agency group sampling exercises to maximise effectiveness, avoid duplication and respond to information received from government agencies. Wherever possible we will focus on lower budget items which pose risks to vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly and underprivileged.</p> <p>Enforcement activities are planned in respect of underage sales of fireworks, tobacco, alcohol, aerosol paints, solvents and other age related products, travel agents, estate agents, credit sales and misleading advertisements, hallmarking and jewellery sales, contract sales of foods to commercial establishments</p>	<p>Activities contribute to the successful Sheffield, 'cleaner greener safer' agenda. Combats social exclusion by targeting goods and trade practices which have greater impact on the vulnerable and disadvantaged.</p> <p>Improves health and safety in relation to consumer products and ensures unsafe products are removed from sale.</p> <p>Contributes to safer neighbourhoods</p> <p>Promotes a fair and equitable market place.</p> <p>Publicity generated as a result of such activities raises public awareness of problems found .</p>

Planned Activity	Reason/ Links to objectives
<p>In addition to the inspection of metrological equipment and goods in the course of programmed compliance visits (prioritised in line with LACORS risk assessments), we will continue to offer a verification service across the full range of metrological equipment.</p> <p>To this end we are working with other authorities across the Yorkshire and Humber region to develop a single 'Notified Body' across the region.</p> <p>We will continue to participate in both South Yorkshire and Yorkshire & the Humber metrology co-ordinating groups to develop and adopt best practice.</p>	<p>Service user surveys show continuing demand for the service.</p> <p>Supportive of 'A best performing council'. Assisting in making Sheffield a thriving and competitive city by supporting business and industry with provision of high quality calibration and metrology services to promote a fair and equitable marketplace</p>
<p>We will be reactive to complaints and enquiries received from consumers or other authorities in respect of internet based businesses which are situated within our area. E-commerce businesses with fixed premises will be visited and advised on trading practices, those without fixed premises will be contacted by alternative means. Officers have been trained in cyber-crime investigation and will carry out investigations and pursue enforcement action where appropriate.</p>	<p>Increased involvement in this area in response to levels of consumer complaints relating to e-commerce issues.</p> <p>A modern customer focused council. Reduces levels of consumer crime and fraud and helps maintain a fair and safe trading environment.</p>

9.0 PLANS TO ENSURE AN EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE AND IMPROVING TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE

Planned Activity	Reason/ Links to objectives
<p>We will continue to raise the profile of the service by the use of local radio and the media, and promote the use of our website as a means of self help and a gateway to ourselves and other agencies. We will produce a twice yearly newsletter for which will be made freely available to the public, both to raise awareness of current consumer issues and service availability.</p> <p>The service plan will be approved by elected members under delegated powers and copies will be circulated to staff and retained by team leaders. The plan will be posted on our website for public access.</p>	<p>Our continuing objective is to be a 'Best Performing, Modern, Customer focussed Council' and to communicate and raise the profile of the service and our plans to staff, council members, service users and the public.</p>
<p>The service plan reflects the 2006/7 work programme which identifies the teams responsible for delivery of the various elements of the plan. Performance targets are set for key elements, which are monitored on a monthly basis. Team leaders will allocate work to individual officers, monitor and review performance and implement control action as necessary to ensure delivery of the plan. Performance on achieving the whole of the plan will be reviewed on a monthly basis at management team meetings. Individual performance targets will be cascaded down the organisation from this plan by individual performance appraisals in line with 'Investors in People' and 'ISO 9001:2000' requirements.</p> <p>All staff will have a monthly 'one to one' meeting with their line manager to discuss progress against targets, progress with development and training, and to raise any general work related issues.</p>	<p>Feedback from review meetings informs control action and target review. Continuing aim to be a best performing council.</p> <p>To realise the full potential of existing staff, ensure performance targets are met and maintain required levels of competency. To maintain involvement of the workforce in delivering the council's priorities.</p>
<p>Expenditure will be monitored on a cost centre basis utilising the corporate financial reporting system.</p>	<p>Supports the aim to be a best performing council with sound financial management and ensures resources are allocated appropriately</p>

Planned Activity	Reason/ Links to objectives
<p>We will continue to seek comments on ways of improving the service through user and non-user surveys, via our website 'your views' facility and the tear off 'comments form' included in the newsletter.</p>	<p>Comments received will be considered as part of future service planning and development within the framework of our quality system.</p>
<p>Complaints are dealt with in accordance with the council's complaints procedure. All complaints are investigated and justified complaints rectified or remedied where appropriate. The complaints procedure is also used to inform improvement action within the ISO 9001:2000 framework. Details of all complaints are recorded and the number of complaints received and the number found to be justified are reported quarterly for directorate and corporate scrutiny</p>	<p>Feedback is used to inform preventive as well as corrective action. Our continuing objective is to be a 'Best Performing' and 'Modern, Customer Focussed' Council.</p>
<p>We will continue to operate within the framework of our ISO 9001:2000 accredited quality management system encompassing common protocols and best practice models developed in conjunction with the Yorkshire & the Humber trading standards co-ordinating group and LACORS. We will continue to deliver consumer advice in compliance with the Community Legal Service quality mark.</p>	<p>Feedback from staff and service users instigates corrective and preventive action within the quality management system. Third party assessment of the system verifies compliance with current best practice.</p>
<p>We are website enabled with links to other sites for useful information. All staff are e-mail enabled and have access to the internet. E-mail and internet are utilised to access information relating to professional practice and legislative developments via government agencies and professional institutions (DTI, FSA, LACORS, TSI etc). Information relating to hazard warnings is received and disseminated to officers via e-mail to aid efficiency. We utilise the Consumer Regulations Website to share information regarding problem traders. We subscribe to a wide variety of on-line and paper based reference manuals to which all staff have access</p>	<p>Readily accessible, up to date and comprehensive reference material and guidance notes are essential to enable officers to carry out their statutory duties and facilitate the provision of high quality advice and information both to consumers and businesses.</p>

Planned Activity	Reason/ Links to objectives
<p>The service is accessible via the internet, by post, by personal callers and by telephone, with voicemail and voicemail utilised where appropriate.</p> <p>The service is fully committed to the Yorkshire & the Humber 'Consumer Direct' initiative involving automatic redirection of telephone calls and e-mails relating to consumer advice, and shared database access to allow electronic transfer of data. This ensures information is available regarding businesses within our area as well as facilitating referral of complaints which are of a complex nature or require further investigation</p> <p>FLARE database /recording system is used to maintain efficient records and produce performance and activity reports.</p> <p>Officers involved in enforcement activities are provided with mobile phones to aid efficient response to service needs and also to improve health and safety by providing means of contact in difficult situations.</p>	<p>Provision of easily accessible consumer advice helps combat social exclusion and empowers the disadvantaged and vulnerable.</p> <p>A major benefit to service users is the increase in availability of advice due to the extended operating hours of Consumer Direct and the greater capacity to handle large volumes of telephone enquiries.</p> <p>Enables generation of locally and nationally required statistical information and determination of risk assessment and required inspection frequencies.</p> <p>Improves officer efficiency and contributes to health and safety of staff.</p>
<p>The South Yorkshire Joint Trading Standards Committee evaluates the effectiveness of co-ordinated activities undertaken within the boundaries of the four constituent authorities and makes recommendations for future participation in joint activities.</p> <p>The Yorkshire & the Humber Trading Standards Group has 4 technical panels intended to share information and knowledge between the constituent members. Each generates an annual work programme designed to maximise available resources in satisfaction of common corporate aims. The Chief TSO sits on the Executive of the group, which evaluates outturns from these work programmes and recommends future developments. The regional co-ordinator for the above group facilitates sharing of information between the members in</p>	<p>Feedback from the South Yorkshire Joint Trading Standards Committee and the Yorkshire & the Humber Executive informs future planning and service delivery.</p> <p>This contributes to the aim to be a 'best performing', 'modern customer focussed council' committed to working in partnership and improving access to services.</p>

Planned Activity	Reason/ Links to objectives
<p>addition to highlighting pertinent issues and information generated by LACORS, TSI and other agencies.</p> <p>We attend local GAIN (government agencies intelligence network) meetings and share information and participate in joint enforcement activities where appropriate.</p> <p>We are party to a 'joint enforcement protocol' in relation to the Licensing Act. This involves exchange of information and participation in joint enforcement activities with other council services, the Police, Fire Service, Crown Prosecution Service and HM Customs & Excise</p> <p>The department's role as co-ordinator of the local Consumer Support Network promotes a seamless advice service, aided by sharing of information and carrying out training to network members.</p>	<p>Development of the Consumer Support Network contributes to creation of successful neighbourhoods.</p>
<p>The four South Yorkshire authorities have a history of joint working and have a reciprocal agreement to enable cross boundary working in the event of an emergency occurring.</p> <p>The Trading Standards Service, and officers to be contacted in case of an emergency outside normal working hours, are identified in the Council's Emergency Plan. Procedures exist for dealing with hazard warnings relating to food and unsafe goods. Local press and radio are contacted to issue warnings to the public in respect of unsafe goods or harmful business practices.</p> <p>Where information is received relating to unsafe or dangerous products originating from businesses for which we act as home authority, we will visit the business as a matter of priority.</p>	<p>Enables the service to respond to emergencies effectively</p>
<p>The procedures for policy review and delegated powers are incorporated in the quality management system and are subject to internal and external audit. Reporting at Trading Standards service level within the authority is generally approved under delegated powers to increase the speed of decision making and reduce bureaucracy.</p>	<p>Ensures formal reporting procedures are carried out in an efficient and timely manner</p>

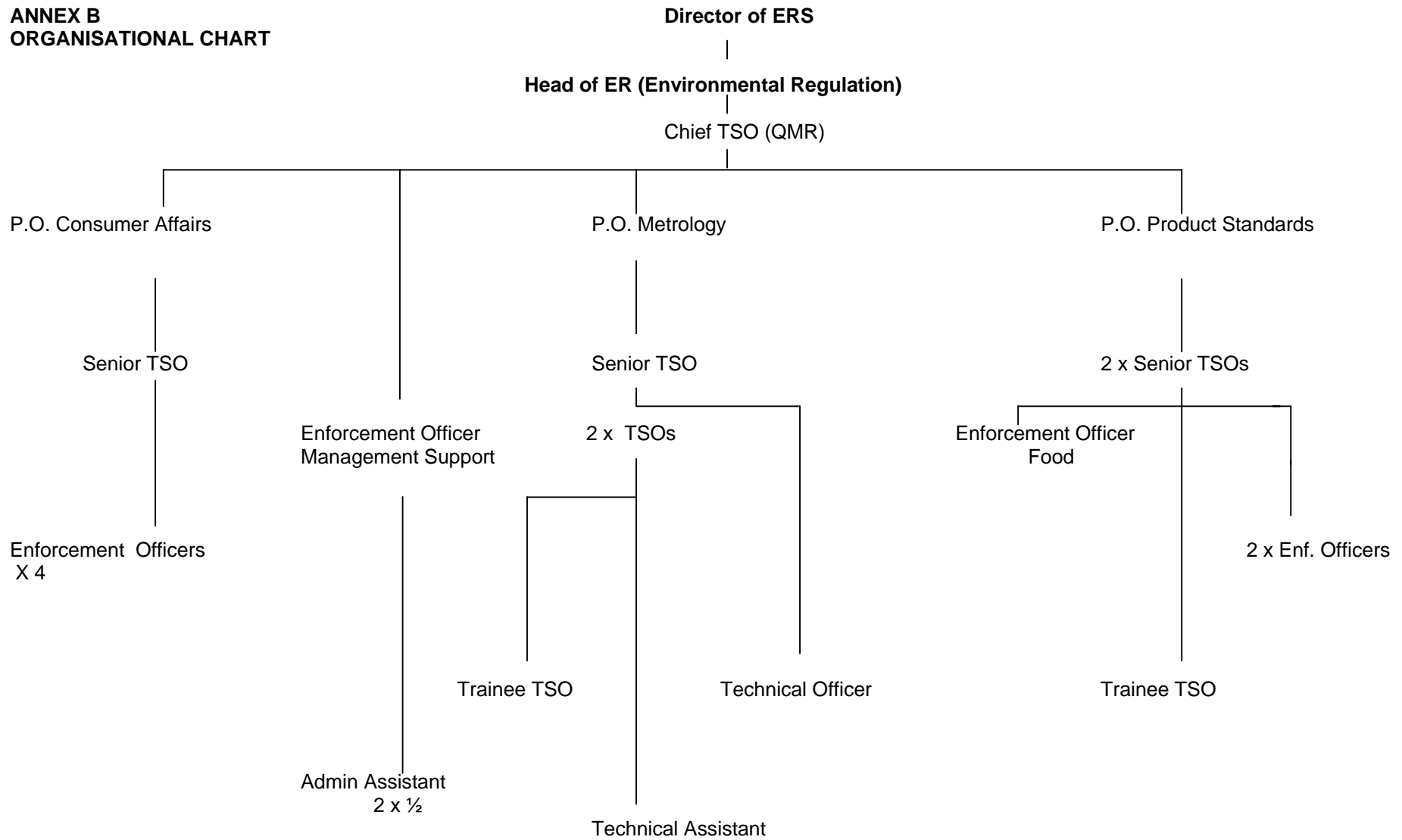
Planned Activity	Reason/ Links to objectives
<p>Monthly monitoring of programmed activities and service issues takes place at management team meetings whilst individual team leaders monitor progress within their respective sections. There is an annual management review of the quality system to examine overall performance and identify corrective actions and improvements. Statistical and performance returns to government agencies and corporate monitoring unit are compiled and submitted in line with required timetables.</p>	<p>To enable ongoing review of progress and identify areas for improvement</p>
<p>We will review and publish our enforcement policy annually and carry out annual assessments of our performance in relation to performance measure BV 166 (checklist of compliance with enforcement best practice)</p>	<p>To achieve a level of performance comparable with the best authorities in the country.</p>
<p>We will develop the use of mobile technology to enable remote access of databases and recording of data.</p>	<p>To increase officer efficiency and reduce the volume of paper based recording. This will make best use of available technology and improve environmental efficiency through reduced paper usage.</p>

ANNEX A

List of Operational Procedures

- 1 Management Review
- 2 Policy Review and Delegated Powers
- 3 Document and Data Control
- 4 Purchasing and Control of Supplies
- 5 Control of Operational Equipment
- 6 Workload Monitoring
- 7 Complaints, Non-conformances and Corrective Action
- 8 Control of Quality Records
- 9 Internal Quality Audit
- 10 Training
- 11 Customer Enquiries – Receipt and Actioning
- 11a Community Legal Services (CLS) Additional Procedure
- 12 Retail Inspection
- 13 Criminal Case File Preparation,
Submission and Completion
- 14 Verification of Weighing and Measuring Equipment
- 15 Sampling
- 16 Criminal Case Investigation and Interview Procedure
- 17 Inspection of Weighing and Measuring Equipment and Products and Production
Processes on Non-Retail Premises, Manufacturers or Producers Premises
Garage Forecourts
- 18 Food Hazard Warnings

**ANNEX B
ORGANISATIONAL CHART**



ANNEX C

SHEFFIELD TRADING STANDARDS

WORK PROGRAMME 2006-2007

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	C= Consumer Affairs P= Product Standards M= Metrology	SECTION INVOLVED
1 To undertake a survey and enforcement programme relating to hidden charges in connection with holiday sales offers.	Survey of local travel agents premises and advertising.		C
2 To undertake a survey and enforcement programme on credit sales and advertisements.	Participate in national 'Consumer Credit Sweep' in conjunction with OFT to assess compliance with Consumer Credit advertising regulations		C
3 To Quality Mark the Consumer Advisory Service at the CLS 'General Help with Casework' standard	Achieve accreditation to higher level to reflect increased level of intervention and casework undertaken.		C
4 To provide help and assistance in the resolution of consumer enquiries and disputes and undertake investigations in respect of cases of unfair or illegal trade practices.	To respond to all enquiries within 3 working days. In partnership with Consumer Direct, deal with 7200 new enquiries over the year.		C
5 To undertake a survey and enforcement programme in relation to misleading price indications (Part 111 Consumer Protection Act)	Survey of 'top 5' most complained about local businesses.		C
6 To provide training sessions to external advice providers within the CSN partnership	5 training sessions to be delivered		C
7 To undertake a survey and enforcement programme relating to internet selling by local businesses .	Survey of local internet businesses in relation to Distance Selling Regulations, E-Commerce Directive and Unfair Terms in Consumer Contract Regulations		C
8 To participate in events aimed at providing advice and assistance to businesses in relation to fair trading and trading standards legislation.	Attend a minimum of 4 such events with additional training events in response to business requests or where new legislation requires dissemination of information.		CMP

	ACTIVITY	TARGET	SECTION
9	To undertake programmed compliance visits of high/medium risk premises for compliance with trading standards legislation.	Visit 95% of high risk premises (Est 199 premises from a total of 209) Visit up to a maximum of 50% of medium risk premises (Est 1660 from a total of 3321). In all cases, secure compliance in 95% of all premises visited within the year. Visits to medium risk premises may be reduced to give priority to reactive project work during the year.	CMP
10	To contact low risk premises to confirm business details and identify potential changes to risk status	Contact 19% of low risk premises (Est 1100 premises)	CMP
11	To undertake a programme of inspection of traders on City Market premises for compliance with Trading Standards legislation.	To carry out surveillance visits of all market stalls annually and full inspections of stalls in accordance with risk assessment frequencies.	MP
12	To instigate investigations into criminal offences under delegated duties and where appropriate undertake court proceedings in accordance with the Unit's prosecution policy.	To respond to all complaints relating to illegal trade practices within 3 working days. Where appropriate prepare files for prosecution/issue of enforcement orders under the Enterprise Act / formal cautions, estimated at 30 annually.	CMP
13	To undertake all relevant licensing and registration duties.	Record and monitor all registrations and licences under the Consumer Credit Act, South Yorkshire Act, Poisons Act and Licensing Act. In the case of 'premise licences and club premises certificate' applications, we will review every application and make appropriate recommendations within 20 working days of receipt of application.	CMP
14	To undertake a programme of test and inspection of metrological equipment in use for the retail sale of petrol for compliance with Trading Standards legislation.	All retail sites annually approximating at 63 premises.	M
15	To undertake a programme of test and inspection of weighbridges in trade use by industry for compliance with Trading Standards legislation.	All industrial users annually approximating at 63 premises.	M
16	To undertake a programme of test and inspection of metrological medium mass equipment in trade use by industry for compliance with Trading Standards legislation	All industrial users biennially approximating at 100 premises per year.	M

	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	<u>SECTION</u>
17	To carry out the verification of petrol pumps for trade use.	To respond to all requests for verifications within 3 working days	M
18	To provide a test service for the verification of linear measures for trade use.	To respond to all requests for verifications within 3 working days	M
19	To provide a test service for the verification of beer meters for trade use.	To respond to all requests for verifications within 3 working days	M
20	To provide a test service for the verification of weighing and measuring equipment in general for trade use.	To respond to all requests for verifications within 3 working days	M
21	To provide a calibration service to local businesses	To generate income estimated at £10k	M
22	To undertake a programme of inspection of city based businesses packaging under the average weight system.	High risk businesses visited annually, Medium risk biennially. Approximates to 50 visits overall per annum.	MP
23	To develop/audit the Unit's quality management systems along with Best Value Performance Indicators.	Accreditation to CLS., IIP, ISO 9001-2000. Retain NWML Approved Body status and integrate into developing Yorkshire and the Humber Notified Body. Achieve BVPI 166 score of 100%	CMP
24	To prepare evidence portfolio and apply for Charter Mark status	Application to be submitted by June 06 with a view to securing accreditation before March 07	CMP
25	To participate in joint regional and national surveys and enforcement projects relevant to Trading Standards functions.	Participate in all surveys and enforcement projects approved by the Yorkshire & Humber group executive. Participate in survey and enforcement projects approved by the South Yorkshire Trading Standards Liaison Group	CMP
26	To undertake service user surveys and analyse results to identify potential service improvements.	1) Questionnaires to 10% C.A. service users 2) Questionnaires to 10% premises following compliance visits 3) Annual survey of fee paying service users 4) Questionnaires to random sample of 500 households/business premises to gauge 'non-user' awareness of service and indicate areas of Trading Standards work considered most important. To achieve a satisfaction index score of 86% in relation to national performance measures for consumer satisfaction and 90.5% in relation to business satisfaction	CM

	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	SECTION
27	To implement a maintenance/calibration programme for all operational equipment.	Calibration status of standards/equipment compliant with regulatory requirements.	MP
28	To implement a general sampling and inspection programme of retail premises for compliance with food standards legislation.	Food sampling test programme utilising the services of the public analyst, in conjunction with South Yorkshire and Yorks & Humber technical groups.	P
29	To implement a general sampling and inspection programme of retail premises for compliance with product safety legislation.	Sampling of items in respect of Product Standards and Safety legislation to be carried out having regard to South Yorkshire and Yorks & Humber technical group priorities or reactive to Consumer complaints.	P
30	To implement a programme of inspection of city based manufacturers, producers and importers of products for compliance with both product safety and food standards legislation and respond to all relevant complaints/enquiries.	Carry out programmed inspections in line with risk assessment criteria. Provide advice and assistance in line with Home Authority principles. Seek formal written agreement to our Home Authority partnership principles and invite comment on our enforcement policy.	MP
31	To implement an enforcement programme for report and action on the sale of fireworks. To participate in a joint exercise with SY Police and the Fire & Rescue service to promote safety and reduce instances of anti social behaviour	Contact all licensed firework sellers and undertake test purchase programmes in relation to underage sales.	P
32	Promote and administer a Responsible Retailer Scheme, including advice and education to businesses in relation to sale of age restricted products. Additionally involvement of local community through schools and community groups to raise awareness of health and safety/anti social behaviour implications of underage sales.	Administer current membership and continue rollout to a further 150 premises. Achieve a 30% success rate in recruiting members to the scheme from the businesses approached. Deliver talks to community groups and schools , particularly focussing on areas with BME households.	P
33	To carry out test purchase exercises in relation to sales of age restricted products and take enforcement action in respect of offences discovered.	6 test purchasing exercises to include purchases of tobacco, alcohol, solvents, aerosols, videos and fireworks	P
34	To implement Officer training and development programmes relevant to the Unit's operational requirements and to verify officer competency. To implement monthly 'one to one' sessions between all staff and line managers. To support existing trainees.	Carry out training as identified at individual officer training and development appraisals. Monthly review of individual performance Provide mentoring and support to trainees in relation to Diploma in Trading Standards workbook exercises.	CMP

	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	SECTION
35	To develop and sustain business partnerships	<p>Maintain existing partnerships with Metrology service users & Education Authority. Extend co-operation with Area Health Authority in relation to weighing equipment in medical establishments. Support the South Yorkshire Motor Trade Partnership.</p> <p>Examine applications by Sheffield tradespeople for inclusion in the South Yorkshire Home Services Directory of Vetted Tradespeople.</p> <p>Participate in joint Environmental Regulation development of business forums to seek views and address business needs.</p>	CMP
36	Increase levels of Consumer and Business Education and disseminate information in relation to Food Hazard Warnings.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Contribute to Local Radio consumer spot 2) Active website with guidance, self help information and downloadable leaflets 3) Information dissemination via Consumer Support Network 4) Develop contacts to increase awareness in schools in relation to consumer issues and underage sales 5) Issue press releases and utilise media to raise awareness of current consumer issues. 	CMP

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

SHEFFIELD TRADING STANDARDS

ENFORCEMENT POLICY

This document sets out standards of enforcement that businesses, individuals and the community as a whole can expect from the Council's Sheffield Trading Standards Service. It commits all officers to good enforcement policies and procedures.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of the Service is to maintain a fair and safe trading environment for consumers and businesses alike which is achieved through the equitable and consistent enforcement of Trading Standards legislation.

We recognise that the effectiveness of legislation depends upon the compliance of those regulated and that most businesses and individuals want to comply with the law. We will assist and advise wherever possible, whilst taking firm action against those who flout the law or act irresponsibly.

With this in mind the service has adopted the Government's Concordat on Good Enforcement for responsible businesses and in doing so commits itself to the following aims and procedures:-

2.0 AIMS

2.1 Standards

We are committed to consultation with business and other interested parties on service provision. We will draw up clear standards setting out the level of service and performance that the public and business can expect to receive. We will publish these standards and report on our annual performance.

2.2 Openness

We will provide accessible information and advice, in plain language, on the legislation that we enforce. We will be open about how we set about our work, again consulting local business and all other interested parties.

2.3 Helpfulness

We believe that prevention is better than cure and we will actively work with local business to advise on and assist with, compliance with the law. We will provide a courteous and efficient service and our staff will identify themselves by name. We will offer a contact point and telephone number to encourage further liaison.

Application for licences and registrations will be dealt with efficiently and promptly. We will strive to ensure that wherever practicable our activities are effectively co-ordinated to avoid unnecessary overlaps and/or delays.

2.4 Complaints about our Service

All complaints will follow the Council's formal complaint procedure, which is easily accessible to all service users, and which explains the rights of complaint and appeal, including the likely timescales involved.

2.5 Proportionality

We will, as far as the law allows, and where co-operation is given, work with business so that they can meet their legal obligations without unnecessary expense. We will take into account the costs of compliance for business by ensuring that any enforcement action we take or remedial action we require is proportional to the risks. In relation to small businesses, voluntary and community organisations, we will take particular care to help them meet legal obligations without incurring unnecessary costs.

2.6 Consistency

We will carry out our duties in a fair, equitable and consistent manner. Whilst officers necessarily exercise judgement in individual cases, we will have arrangements in place to promote consistency, including liaison with other authorities and agencies. We recognise that there are situations where there is a shared enforcement role. We will ensure that in those circumstances enforcement is effectively and efficiently co-ordinated to avoid duplication of resources.

3.0 PROCEDURES

- ❖ Advice from an officer will be put clearly and simply, confirmed in writing on request, explaining why any remedial work is necessary and over what timescale. Legal requirements will be clearly distinguished from best practice advice.
- ❖ Before formal enforcement action is taken, there will be an opportunity to discuss the circumstances of a case, unless immediate action is required (e.g. to prevent destruction of evidence or there is an imminent risk to health and safety).
- ❖ Where immediate action is taken, reasons for such action will be given at the time, and confirmed in writing in most cases within 5 working days, and in all cases within 10 working days.
- ❖ Where there are rights of appeal against formal action, notification of the appeal mechanism will be clearly set out in writing at the time the action is taken.

4.0 WHEN DO WE PROSECUTE?

Before deciding whether a prosecution shall be taken against a business or individual, we will consider a number of factors in line with the Code for Crown Prosecutors. These factors may include the following:

The seriousness of the alleged offence;

The history of the party concerned;

The willingness of the business or the individual to prevent a recurrence of the problem and co-operate with officers;

Whether it is in the public interest to prosecute;

The realistic prospect of conviction;

Whether any other action (including a formal caution) would be more appropriate or effective;

The views of any complainant and other parties with an interest in a prosecution.

5.0 APPLICATION OF OUR POLICY

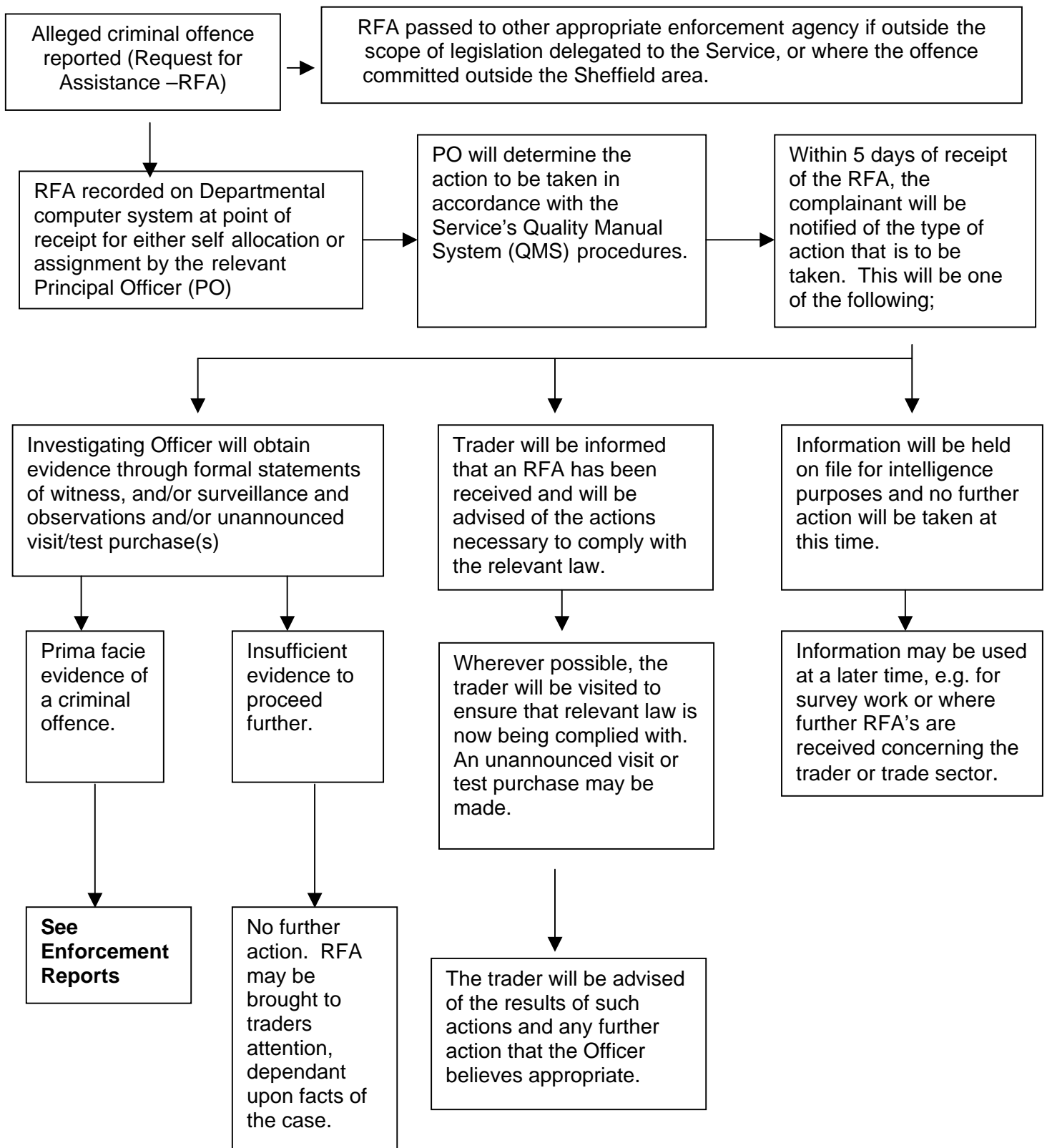
To apply the enforcement policy in a clear and understandable manner, detailed working practices covering the full range of Trading Standards enforcement functions are appended to this document using a series of flowcharts for ease of reference.

And finally, whilst reference will need to be made to the policy in all enforcement decisions, officers will also need to take cognisance of any relevant developing guidance along with service quality system procedures.

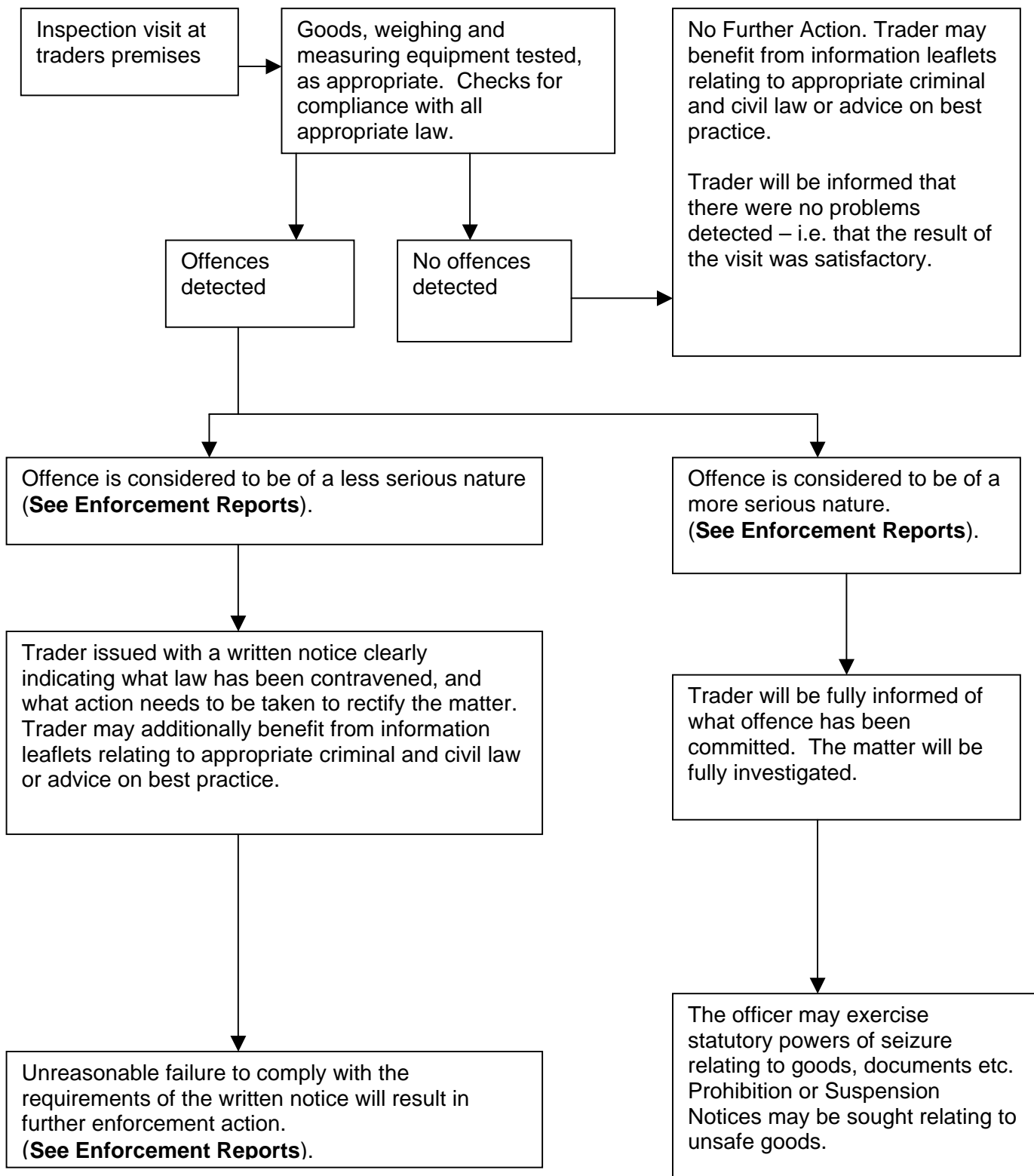
6.0 REVIEW

This document will be subject to an annual review with additional reviews as and when required. Improvements will be introduced to accommodate changes in legislation and local needs.

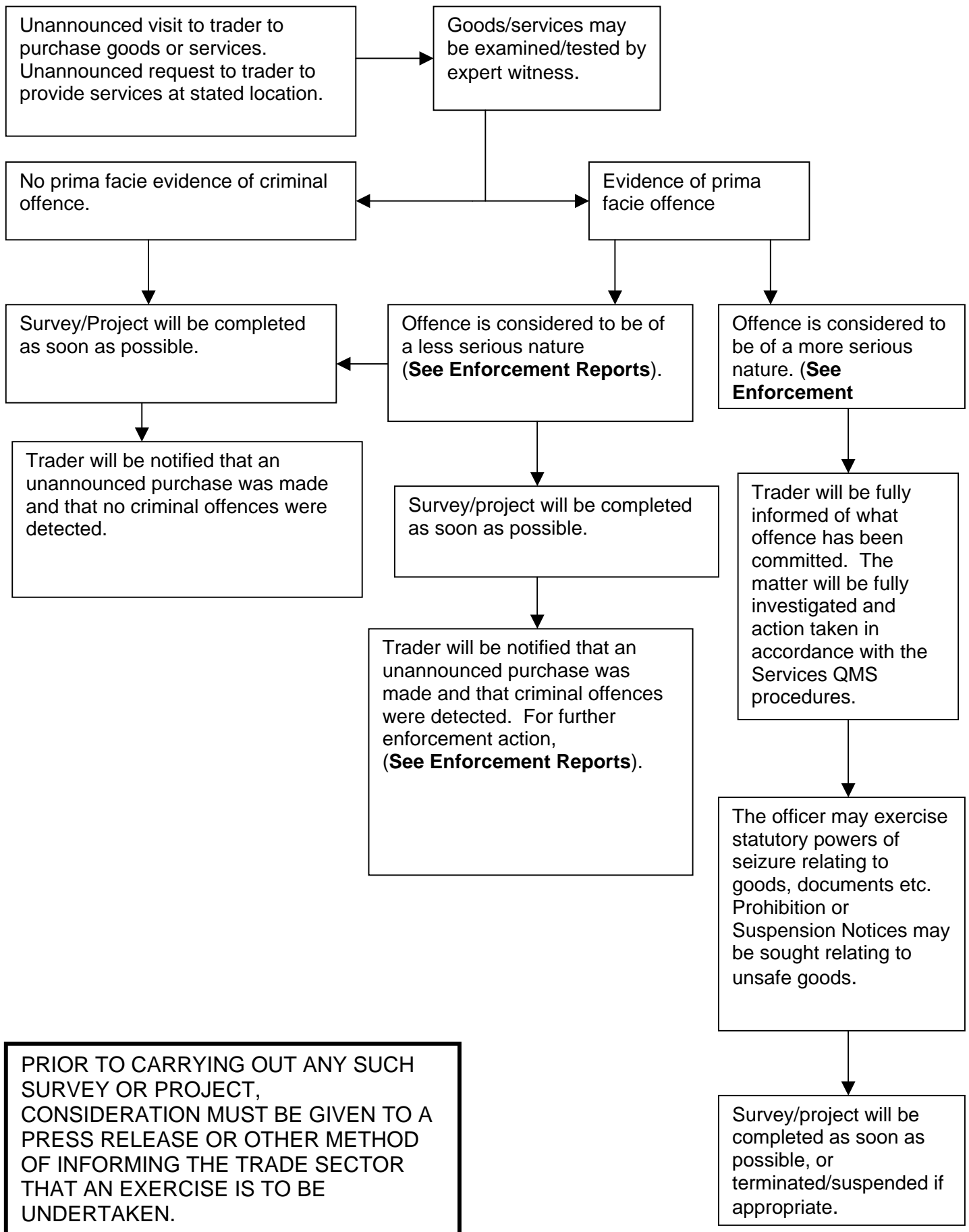
TRADING STANDARDS – Reactive Procedure



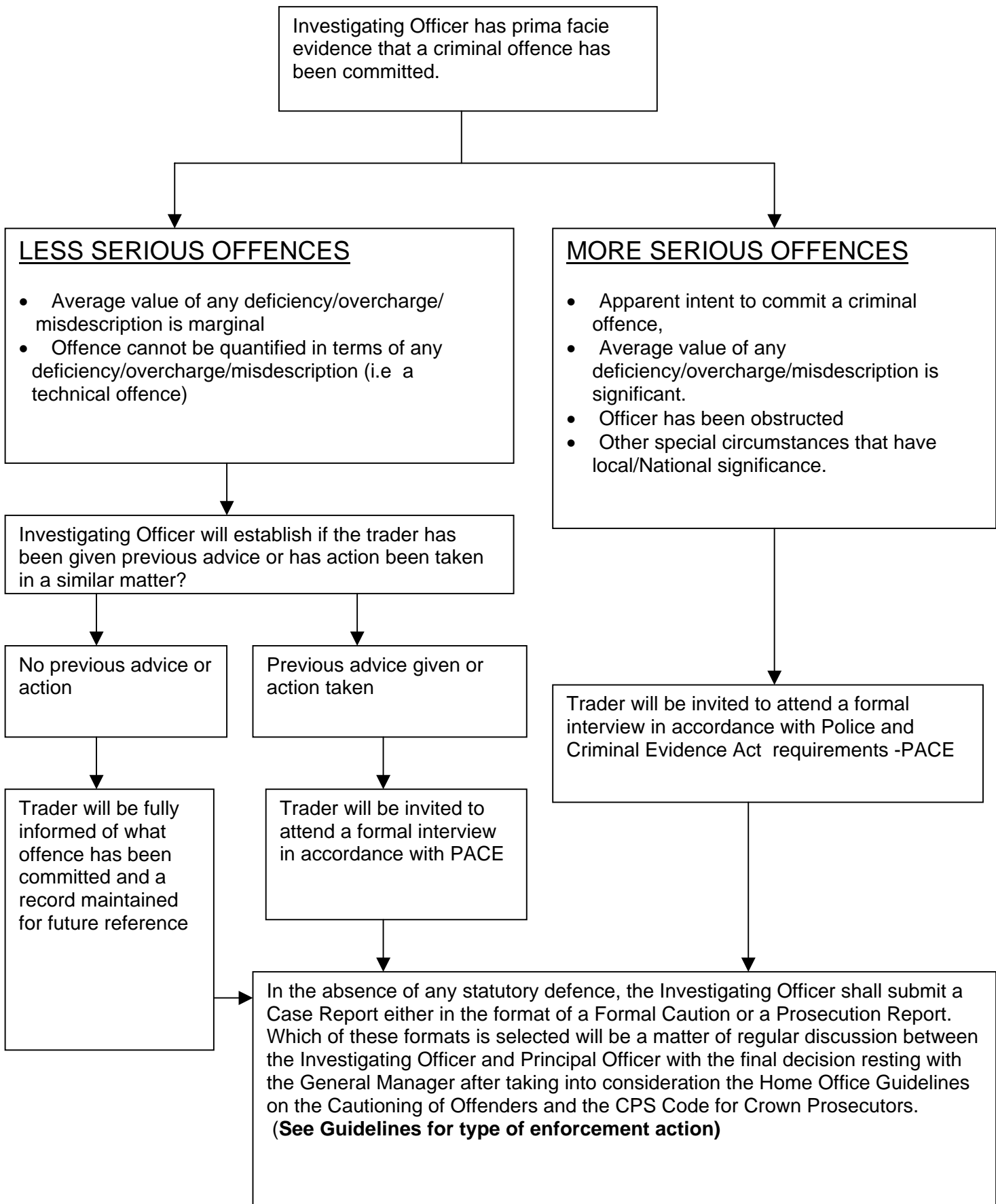
TRADING STANDARDS – Inspection Visits



TRADING STANDARDS – Survey and Project Work



TRADING STANDARDS – Enforcement Reports



TRADING STANDARDS – Guidelines For Type Of Enforcement Action

