

**Local Authority Enforcement  
Liaison Group**

**away day - 20 September 2001**

**summary report**

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# introduction to the away day

The LAELG away day was held to give the group some time to assess its progress so far and agree on its purpose and future direction.

Welcoming all those attending, David Statham encouraged full participation and sharing of views throughout the day

Before meeting, those attending had completed a questionnaire exploring their views on the purpose of the day.

There was a broad consensus that the day should be about

- Reviewing the role of the LAELG
- Revisiting the way the group was working – its purpose, processes and priorities - in order to reach a shared view of the way ahead
- Developing a deeper understanding between all those taking part in and contributing to the liaison group
- Identifying a programme of work going forward

# the journey so far

The group reviewed its current strengths and areas for improvement

## strengths

- The concepts and establishment of the group as a unique and important forum
- The framework agreement
- Information sharing
- Transparency and honest, accurate minutes

## improvements

- Clarity about the group's role, together with more effective communication about what it does
- Striking the right balance between strategic overview and detail
- Striking the right balance between pro-action and reaction
- Wider inclusion and input from a range of people
- Greater remit to influence
- Connecting thinking between legislation and enforcement
- Time and frequency of meetings

A successful outcome for the away day was summarised as; identifying the group's purpose and objectives and generating a new set of terms of reference owned by everyone.

# the group's purpose

## key areas of debate

- Is the group's role to develop, commission, advise on or influence policy?
- Who are the group and its individual members accountable to?
- Is the group proactive; identifying the issues that need attention at an early stage of the process, or reactive: commenting and offering views on issues that are already on the agenda?
- How should the group's relationship with the FSA and its other representatives and stakeholders be defined?

## initial conclusions

- The group has a role to provide a 360-degree view of all issues concerned as policy is being developed. The opportunity to hear and understand this range of views is critical
- The group could usefully strike a balance between being proactive and reactive as circumstances required it
- It is recognised that people come to the group wearing a number of hats. The group is working collectively towards more effective enforcement in order to improve food standards, safety and public health
- Solutions might come from a number of directions, not just FSA
- A defined set of objectives for the group would help maintain focus and avoid the danger of creating a talking shop

## in summary

The focus for the group is enforcement

The group will endeavour to provide a 360-degree perspective on things that will make a positive difference

# objectives

Objectives for the group will be defined and developed in the following areas:

- Improving food standards, safety and public health
- Supporting and improving enforcement
- Improving understanding and communication
- Making a positive difference between policy and practice

## in summary

The group will look at a set of agreed priorities, debate discuss and share knowledge, make influential recommendations and provide advice to people who can make a difference

## shared priorities

For practical purposes five priorities from an extensive list were selected for consideration at the group's next meeting. The group agreed to revisit these when meeting again.

- Licensing
- HACCP
- Consistency (need to define terms)
- Recruitment and training of enforcers
- Traceability

## next actions

An extraordinary meeting was proposed to review five priorities and define how to move forward on objectives