

To: Heads of Service (Environmental Health) in local authorities in England

15 December, 2009

Reference: ENF/E/09/051

Dear colleague,

National 'Scores on the Doors' (SotD) scheme for England, Wales and Northern Ireland – local authority support

As you will know from our regular SotD Progress Updates, the Food Standards Agency has been working on developing a support package for local authorities adopting/migrating to the national SotD scheme. I am writing to you now to outline the details of that package, to set out how we will work with local authorities (LAs), and to invite those LAs that wish to be 'early adopters' of the national scheme to apply for grant funding to assist them in undertaking the necessary 'start-up' activities.

Support package

The support package, which will be available for all LAs adopting or migrating to the national scheme, will include the following elements:

- guidance on implementation and operation of the national six-tier scheme (this is being developed through the SotD Steering Group);
- high-level briefing material that can be used to help inform elected Members about the national scheme and its benefits;
- guidance/support for dealing with the media;
- promotional and marketing materials (including certificate templates, with branded certificate paper and stickers, and artwork for posters/adverts/leaflets etc.);
- consistency training for local authorities, and associated training materials;
- cost-neutral publication of SotD information on a national database, together with cost-neutral IT assistance for linking to the national IT platform and associated IT training.

As regards the guidance on implementation and operation of the scheme, the sections on scope and on 'start up' issues have already been issued to LAs in draft form, and a section on the appeals mechanism is due to be issued before Christmas. Further sections of the guidance will be issued as they are endorsed by the SotD Steering Group.

As regards the other elements of the package, development work is now underway or will begin shortly. We will keep LAs up to date through our SotD Progress Updates.

As matters progress and other LA support requirements emerge, we will consider further development of the package.

Working with 'early adopters'

The Agency has appointed two Environmental Health Officer secondees to work with 'early adopters' over the next six months. Jaan Stanton of Norwich City Council joined the SotD



Team on 7 December and Nat Slade from the Isle of Wight Council will start on 4 January 2010. The secondees both have experience of implementing and operating a SotD scheme and will aim to provide tailored advice and guidance to individual LAs and groups of LAs that are launching together. We already have a list of LAs that are keen to be 'early adopters' and Jaan and Nat will be arranging meetings with them (preferably in groups) early in the New Year.

In addition, we propose to establish an Early Adopters Group to provide a forum for identifying and discussing practical issues and for providing the Agency with on-going feedback on the national scheme guidance.

We are conscious that final details of the scheme are still being worked out but there are certain key 'start-up' activities that can commence now and we will provide funding to support 'early adopters' in undertaking these - details are provided below.

Grant funding

Grant funding is being provided to support LAs in the 'start up' and pre-launch work required for implementing the national SotD scheme and, in particular, for the following activities which are outlined in the draft guidance on 'start up' developed by the SotD Steering Group:

- file/database checks and database cleansing activities;
- scope checks, including identification of establishments that fall within the scope of the scheme;
- development and implementation of a strategy for communicating with local businesses including publicity and promotion.

A total of £500,000 is available for work carried out before the end of March 2010. This will be made available through the allocation of a grant. There is no minimum to the level of funding that LAs can apply for, but by way of a guide, we would anticipate that individual LAs will be awarded a maximum of £10,000. Payment will be made in two stages with 50% provided following approval of the application, and the remainder on satisfactory completion of the work.

In addition to the above activities, where a number of LAs in the same region are planning to adopt the national scheme, we propose to use some of the funding to cover salary costs for an officer to co-ordinate the 'start up' activities of these LAs. These co-ordinators will be identified as appropriate through colleagues in the Agency's offices in Belfast and Cardiff and the Agency's Regional Presence Teams.

To apply for a grant, please complete the form attached at [Annex A](#). Information on the evaluation of applications and arrangements for payment etc. is provided at [Annex B](#). The associated terms and conditions of funding are detailed at [Annex C](#).

The closing date for applications is Friday 15 January 2010 but earlier applications would be welcome.

We will aim to notify LAs of successful bids and the funding awarded by 29 January.

David Millis (020 7276 8424 or david.millis@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk) or I would be very happy to discuss any of the issues raised in the letter.

Yours faithfully,

Catriona Stewart
Head of SotD Team
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