

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

21 July, 2010

Reference: EPC 30/313

Dear colleague,

National 'Food Hygiene Rating Scheme' – grant funding for 'early adopters'

Building on the success of the grant funding scheme run earlier this year and in response to the feedback received from local authorities through the two secondees to the Agency's Scores on the Doors Team, the Agency is today launching a further round of grant funding for 'early adopters' of the national 'Food Hygiene Rating Scheme' (FHRS).

Local authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are invited to apply for funding and I would be grateful if you could forward this letter as appropriate within your authority so that consideration may be given to this.

Future of the FSA and impact of Government spending restrictions

Before setting out the details of the grant funding available, I should highlight that yesterday the Prime Minister announced the Government's intention to retain the FSA with a renewed focus on food safety. I can also reassure you that the Agency remains committed to the introduction of the FHRS and looks forward to seeing the roll out of the scheme by 'early adopters' in their areas from the autumn.

You will also be aware of the current freeze on advertising and marketing budgets. The Agency recognises that this may have an impact on its plans for publicising the national scheme but we are committed to developing and using alternative and innovative channels for supporting and promoting the scheme if this proves necessary.

Grant funding

Grant funding is being provided to support local authorities with the 'start up' and pre-launch work that is required for implementing the FHRS. The particular activities that will be funded have been identified by local authorities already operating 'local' schemes as being critical to a successful launch. These are:

- file/database checks and database cleansing activities;
- scope checks; and
- development and implementation of a strategy for communicating with local businesses.

However, where a local authority has identified other 'start up' activities that are more appropriate to their particular needs, these may also be eligible for grant funding.

In addition to the above activities, where a number of local authorities in the same region are planning to adopt the national scheme, we would consider proposals to use some of the

funding to cover time (salary) costs for an officer to co-ordinate the activities of these local authorities. These co-ordinators could be identified in liaison with colleagues in the Agency's Regional Presence Teams and the Agency's offices in Belfast and Cardiff.

Grants will primarily be for those local authorities that did not previously receive funding with bids from authorities that are involved with the 2012 Olympics and from authorities that propose new or innovative approaches to the work being particularly encouraged. Consideration will also be given to awarding a local authority a second grant for new or different activities where this is justified.

The funding is available for projects taking place in the period between 1 October 2010 and 31 March 2011. This will be made available through the allocation of a grant. There is no minimum to the level of funding that local authorities can apply for, but by way of a guide to how much might be appropriate, local authorities that were funded in the first funding round spent an average of between £5,000 and £7,000. Payment will be made in two stages with 50% provided following approval of the application, and the remainder on satisfactory completion of the work.

To apply for a grant, please complete the form enclosed at [Annex A](#).

[Annex B](#) provides more detailed information on: the activities that are eligible for funding; the application process; the criteria that will be used to assess applications and the assessment process; the process for reporting and evaluating the work carried out; and the arrangements and timetable for payment of grant funding. It also highlights the resource materials available to local authorities intending to adopt the FHRS.

The associated general conditions of agreement to funding are detailed at [Annex C](#).

The closing date for applications is Friday 27 August 2010 but earlier applications would be welcome.

We will aim to notify local authorities of successful bids and the funding awarded by Friday 17 September.

Andrew Stephenson (☎: 020 7276 8388), David Millis (☎: 020 7276 8424) or I would be very happy to discuss with you any of the issues raised in the letter.

Yours faithfully,

Catriona Stewart
Head of 'Scores on the Doors' Team
Enforcement and Local Authority Delivery Division