

## JOINT STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

What has been achieved so far?

In June 2011, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH), the Trading Standards Institute (TSI) and the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO) – now the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) – signed a Joint Statement of Commitment, which identified the need for a partnership approach in the leadership of the regulatory professions of environmental health and trading standards at that time. We made a shared commitment to work together to secure the necessary infrastructure to support the delivery of professional input to regulatory services. We agreed to work collaboratively and openly and we have been grateful for the shared efforts of the Local Government Association (LGA), the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO), the Environmental Health Policy Forum (EHPF), Heads of Environmental Health Services groups and groups in the other services and in devolved nations. Our efforts have focused on four components essential to success:

- support for officers to maintain and develop their professionalism;
- ensuring the necessary support mechanisms exist for business;
- support for professional networks and expert panels for the development of policy and efficient exchange of technical knowledge; and
- maintaining the accessibility of advice and technical knowledge to secure compliance.

### **Support to officers**

A Common Approach to Regulatory Competence was launched in November 2011. This approach has established, for the first time, a core set of regulatory skills and an initial suite of technical knowledge sections. This provides local authorities and front line officers with a free, online resource and an assessment tool to support assurance of professional competence. Over 3100 front line professionals from over 300 local authorities have now signed up to the approach.

### **Support to business**

As the economy moves towards a position of growth, businesses will continue to demand access to high quality regulatory advice that they can rely on when investing in compliance. Local authority regulators are often best placed to provide expert advice, tailored to the needs of individual businesses. Primary Authority has changed the way local authorities work with businesses, helping them to regulate with consistency and confidence. Statutory changes to the scheme were implemented in October 2013, enabling many more businesses to benefit from Primary Authority. The role of Home Authority has been clarified and now regulators can all access the database via TS Interlink.

## **Support for networks and expert panels**

A mapping exercise has been undertaken to understand the extensive range of networks of professional experts. A comprehensive list of these expert panels is now available on all of our websites to enable those in the regulatory landscape to identify relevant sources of expertise. We have worked closely with the LGA, ACTSO, National Trading Standards Board, National Regulators and heads of environmental health services groups to identify and meet the support needs of the various groups and networks. In particular, we have identified that the Chairs of these groups have a key leadership role for the professions and we have sought and are seeking, to support them further.

## **Support for advisers**

We recognise the need for front line professionals to have access to current information and to this end:

- we have advocated the need for front line professionals to have access to up to date information through routes including the Knowledge Hub, TS Interlink and EHC Net;
- we have worked with the LGA to support engagement with their Policy Forums, and to ensure regulatory delivery is high on the local government agenda; and
- we have delivered joint events tailored to the needs of Heads of Regulatory Services to stimulate efficient engagement and networking. Through these events, we have ensured that the key decision makers on regulation in local government can inform current policy debate.

## Looking to the future

Our achievements to date have laid the foundations for strong and sustainable partnerships involving the Local Government Association and national regulators. Notwithstanding future challenges and ongoing pressure from cuts in resources, the regulatory landscape is more settled now than it was in 2011. In this new context our joint work should change in its emphasis. TSI, CIEH and BRDO now affirm our joint commitment to support local authorities and front line professionals with the tools they need to lead and serve the social and economic needs of citizens and businesses alike.

### **A Support to officers: professional competency**

- We will maintain the professionalism of front line officers by mainstreaming the Common Approach to Competence, to help them to ensure their knowledge and skills remain up to date.
- We will work closely with expert panels to develop and maintain more RDNA technical knowledge sections following the established collaborative model.
- We will work with national regulators and local authority employers to ensure that the Common Approach remains fit for purpose, whilst retaining credibility with business stakeholders.
- We recognise that stakeholders need confidence in the consistency of front line delivery. We will work to provide assurance through the Common Approach to embed the principles of the Regulators' Code to ensure front line professionals have the necessary knowledge and skills to support those they regulate.
- We will continue to showcase the benefits that the Common Approach delivers.

## **B Support to business**

- We will continue to develop the evidence base to demonstrate how good regulatory delivery achieves protection and growth.
- We will continue to build the infrastructure that regulators require to effectively support business. This includes ensuring there is an adequate, competent workforce to provide reliable advice and guidance to business and deliver Primary Authority services.
- We will provide and develop a range of products that supports regulators in establishing effective engagement with the business community.
- We will work with Local Enterprise Partnerships to extend the successful Better Business for All pathfinder work to support local growth.
- We will showcase the accomplishments that are achieved through regulatory partnerships, such as Primary Authority and Local Enterprise Partnerships.

## **C Support for networks**

- We will support and empower expert panels to answer the difficult questions posed by practitioners, business and policy makers and lead with confidence and credibility.
- We will support national regulators and policy departments to engage effectively with regulatory professionals and advocate their involvement in expert panels.
- We will promote collaboration between the business and regulatory community and encourage diverse participation in expert panels to maximise the impact that networks achieve in supporting good regulatory delivery and achieving prosperity and protection.
- We will continue to make the case to local authority employers of the value to all parts of the regulatory system of these professional networks.
- We will showcase the achievements of the expert panels in terms of the efficiencies they deliver to the regulatory system and the resilience they provide.
- We will continue to collaborate with the chairs of professional networks and expert panels and support them in their leadership roles.

## **D Support for heads of service**

- We will work with ACTSO, heads of Environmental Health services and other representatives of heads of service to provide networking opportunities with other professionals and business.
- We will support heads of service to influence and develop regulatory policy and provide national insights to complement local policy delivery.
- We will identify and tailor training and development products that meet their specific needs, as leaders and managers of complex services.
- We will support heads of service in showcasing their contributions to good regulatory outcomes.

Joint Statement of Commitment



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February 2014