

## LICENSING SECTION SERVICE PLAN 2009-2012

### Service Description

The Licensing Service primary function is to provide businesses with the relevant licences or permits necessary to carry out a legitimate business.

The service also seeks to

- Protect consumers and business from illegal and unlicensed activities
- Ensure that licensed activity is carried out in a manner that it is not detrimental to the health and safety of users or the economic welfare of compliant businesses

### Service Activities

#### Advice and processing of applications

- Provide information and education to assist businesses and consumers to understand the range of licensing legislation
- Enable businesses to apply for licences through a variety of mediums
- Provide a conduit for businesses to suggest ways within which improvements in standards of licensed activity within Bracknell Forest can be achieved

#### Inspection and Compliance

- Delivery of a targeted inspection programme focused upon those businesses presenting the highest risk to consumers
- Actively operating a penalty points scheme in respect of taxis and private hire contraventions
- Enabling the resolution of disputes between consumers and businesses by advice and intervention
- Investigating serious breaches of the legislation or licence conditions
- Targeted activity to reduce crime, disorder and anti social behaviour within Bracknell Forest

#### Service Improvement and Development

- Review of policies, plans and strategies to ensure they are meeting needs and expectation of our stakeholders
- Improving the cooperation, effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery by working with partners on shared aims
- Improving access to and awareness of the Licensing service for consumers and businesses
- Ensuring staff have the knowledge, skills and support to deliver the service

- Continuing to improve our service by managing our performance and comparing ourselves against national performance measures and standards.

## **Context for Service Delivery**

### External Drivers

The Rogers Review of Enforcement Priorities for Trading Standards and Environmental Health Services identified six enforcement priorities:

- Fair Trading
- Alcohol Licensing
- Air Quality
- Improving Health in the workplace
- Hygiene of Food Businesses
- Animal and Public Health

The "economic downturn" has a direct and serious impact upon residents and businesses within the Borough. There is a pressing need for local authority services to support residents and businesses to retain economic prosperity during this economic downturn. The Licensing service has an important role to play within Local Authority support programmes.

### Internal Drivers

Account needs to be and will be taken of the Council's 6 medium term objectives for the period 2009-11. The Licensing service will aim to tailor its priorities and actions to best support the Council's objectives relating to:

- Town fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Promoting health and achievement
- Create a Borough where people are safe and feel safe.
- Value for money
- Sustain economic prosperity

## Licensing Service Objectives

### 1 Ensure Licensing within Bracknell Forest is contributing to residents' safety, health, economic and environmental being by:

- Investigating unlicensed activity
- Monitoring and improving business compliance through targeted proactive enforcement activities
- Tackling bad practices by responding to complaints, and enabling resolution of disputes between consumers and businesses.

**What success will look like** - Rising standards of business compliance with licensing legislation together with evidence of the successful tackling of disruptive, unsafe or unlicensed activities

### Service actions

Council Objective	Service Action	Lead Officer
Create a Borough where people are safe and feel safe	Investigate serious or illegal practices by way of formal enforcement and other interventions against those businesses causing most detriment	
Create a Borough where people are safe and feel safe	Contribute to crime and disorder reduction within Bracknell Forest including the reduction of anti social behaviour by risk based assessment and monitoring of licensed activity	
Sustain economic prosperity	Ensure effective licensing in Bracknell Forest through a programme of intelligence led enforcement activities to monitor and improve business compliance	
Create a Borough where people are safe and feel safe	Enable the resolution of disputes between consumers and businesses through effective advice, information and intervention	
Value for money	Through partnership working deliver a licensing service that delivers more for less	
Create a Borough where people are safe and feel safe	Support older and/or vulnerable people to lead independent and safe lives by providing a taxi service suitable for their needs	

2 **Through effective and efficient licensing processes assist businesses and consumers within Bracknell Forest to be informed, confident and successful by:**

- Responding to requests for advice and information to enable businesses to make effective choices.
- Providing targeted proactive information and advice to help businesses avoid non-compliance with licensing legislation.

**What success will look like** – Successful and compliant businesses. Consumers avoiding problems when buying on the market and an ability to resolve their own complaints when they do encounter problems sometimes following advice from the service

**Service actions:**

<b>Council Objective</b>	<b>Service Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
Sustain economic prosperity	Provide easy to access and read information for businesses on licensing matters.	
Value for money	Provide a an efficient and seamless service from the application to the grant of a licence or permit	
Sustain economic prosperity	Provide a high quality advice and support service to businesses to help improve current and future compliance and reduce unnecessary burden	
Create a Borough where people are safe and feel safe	Deliver a targeted inspection programme focussing on those businesses presenting the highest risk to consumers	
Create a Borough where people are safe and feel safe	Support older and/or vulnerable people to lead independent and safe lives by providing a taxi service suitable for their needs	
Sustain economic prosperity	Enable the resolution of disputes between consumers and businesses through effective advice, information and intervention	

**3 Maximise our efficiency through a culture of value for money and continuous performance improvement by:**

- Improving customer focus
- Delivering excellent services and ensuring good value for money
- Developing and supporting our workforce

**What success will look like** – High levels of business and consumer satisfaction with the service through excellent support and performance management of staff. The provision of adequately trained staff with processes in place that enable work to be effectively targeted with improving results.

**Service actions**

<b>Council Objective</b>	<b>Service Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
Sustain economic prosperity	Improve access to and awareness of Licensing services for consumers and businesses	
Value for money	Continue to improve our service by managing our performance and comparing ourselves against national performance measures	
Value for money	Develop the use of our knowledge, intelligence, operational support and partnerships to improve planning and delivery	
Sustain economic prosperity	Review our plans, policies and strategies to ensure that they meet the needs and expectations of our stakeholders	
Sustain economic prosperity	Ensure our staff has the knowledge, skills and support to deliver a modern Licensing service.	