

# Local Authority Pollution Prevention Control Function Audit 2008

- The Audit sought to demonstrate the Effectiveness and Accountability of the Council's delivery of the Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) regime.
- The Council was audited against a number of agreed standards produced by the Chief Environmental Health Officers Group (CEHOG) – Pollution Control Sub-Group.
- The auditing process reflected compliance with regulatory service requirements and actions representative of best practice in the delivery of a PPC function.

- The aim of the audit was to set up a process of Peer Review similar to that which is currently common practice in Great Britain.
- The audit was conducted as a Pilot made up of one Council from each of the Environmental Health Groups and Belfast.
- The intention is to set up an acceptable process whereby all Councils in Northern Ireland can be Peer Reviewed regarding their delivery of the PPC function on a regular basis.
- The audit for Belfast was undertaken on the 26<sup>th</sup> March by Officers from the Southern Group Environmental Health Committee.

# The Questionnaire consisted of 148 questions set out in 12 separate sections

- Enforcement Policy and Procedures
- Managed Work Programme
- Review and Quality of District Council's Management of PPC Enforcement
- Competence and Training
- Investigation of Complaints about District Council
- Premise Profile, Enforcement statistics and Promotion of the Service
- Documented Procedure and List of Legislation/ / Guidance
- Facilities and Equipment
- Premises Working Files
- Inspection Reports and Follow Up Letters
- Enforcement & Suspension Notices
- Variation Notices

- A report to CEHOG to detail the performance of the 5 Councils in the Pilot is in the process of being drafted.
- No Council is to be named specifically as the main purpose of the Pilot is to set up procedures for future use.
- An interim report of the performance of Belfast has been provided for internal usage.

# Belfast Findings - Summary

- The audit indicated that the delivery of the PPC function was being undertaken to a consistent high quality.
- It was evident that the PPC specialism of officers responsible for the function has led to the development of a strong commitment to service quality.
- In general the standard of arrangements for the enforcement of the service is good, with a strong commitment among both management and officers to develop a high quality service.

# Strengths which can be highlighted

- The consistent achievement of PPC inspection targets
- The regular monitoring and reporting of the PPC function as a key element of the Environmental Protection Unit's Business Plan
- A training and development culture supported with quality procedures to ensure that staff receive appropriate training and support relative to their jobs
- Regular, open and helpful interaction with process operators and applicants in relation to the PPC function
- No complaints have been received regarding delivery of the PPC function or respective officers
- High quality maintenance of public register and working files
- Provision and maintenance of all necessary equipment and guidance in order to carry out the PPC function
- The use of a comprehensive software system in parallel with hard copy working files to record all interactions and time-spend in relation to PPC function

There are no fundamental weaknesses in the Council's arrangements for the delivery of the PPC Function