

THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
Council Meeting – 8th December 2005
Report from the Chief Executive

OVERVIEW FROM WALES

1.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 This report summarises the activities and progress in ongoing projects in Wales being led by Julie Barratt since the last meeting of Council.

1.2 Council are recommended to note the report.

2.0 DETAILS

- 2.1 Following a radio interview with BBC Radio Wales during Conference the Director has been invited by BBC Radio Wales to join its panel of newspaper reviewers. She is required to attend the studios in Cardiff on a monthly basis to select and talk about items of interest from the newspapers, for the Good Morning Wales programme, broadcasting twice, at 7.20 am and 8.20am. Items which are of public and environmental health interest are selected, and where possible the CIEH policy view is given. This is a very valuable opportunity to raise the profile of the CIEH and to promote our policy in the Principality on the BBC local radio's flagship programme.
- 2.2 It has become clear that HSC health and safety drivers are not those most appropriate for Wales, and that the partnership working projects selected are not the most appropriate in the light of the Health Challenge Wales driver. CIEH is therefore leading a working group made up of Wales Heads of Environmental Health Group, and Health and Safety Technical Panel and the HSE Wales to draft a Health and Safety Strategy for Wales. The draft strategy was circulated to Heads of Environmental Health and within the HSE in November, and has been circulated to external parties this month. It will be launched in March 2006.
- 2.3 CIEH has been speaking on behalf of the profession during the E coli outbreaks in South Wales. The Director has appear on numerous national and regional radio and television programmes advising as to the role of EHPs in food poisoning outbreaks, standard investigation procedures and good hygiene practise in the home and in schools. The role of CIEH in speaking for the profession has been welcomed by local authorities who have been prevented from speaking for legal reasons. The Director has appeared on a number of occasions on the BBC national and regional news, ITV regional and national news, Week In Week Out, and regional news programme and on the Today programme on Radio 4, Radio 5 Live and regional news programmes. She was also interviewed by the Real Story programme for BBC1 regarding the shortage of EHPs, a story which flowed from the E coli outbreak.
- 2.4 The National Assembly for Wales has announced that it will hold a public inquiry into the events surrounding the E coli outbreak. It has also asked the Acting Chief Medical Officer to conduct an inquiry into the way the Outbreak Control Team has performed in investigation the outbreak. In respect of its own inquiry the National Assembly wrote to CIEH asking for our views as to the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry. There were provided and included, *inter alia*, the cause of the outbreak, the effectiveness of the outbreak control measures, communication issues, the effectiveness of the Farm-to-Fork regime and the value of the FSA Wales Audit Reports to local authority Food Teams, which are presently subject to delays exceeding 18 months in some cases. On 7th November the Director attended at the Welsh Assembly and gave evidence to the Outbreak Inquiry Committee regarding our comments as to the Terms of Reference. The Director has also met with the Team Leader heading the CMO's Inquiry to discuss with him the role for the CIEH in the Inquiry, which will include commenting on documents and procedures used in and generated by the Outbreak Control Team. The CMO's Inquiry will report in December 2005, the National Assembly's Public Inquiry is planned to commence in January 2006.
- 2.5 On 3rd November CIEH launched the Health Challenge Wales Tool Kit, to which reference appeared in the last Council report. The Tool Kit contains 16 interventions which tackle the key targets of Health Challenge Wales. It was launched by John Griffiths AM, Deputy Minister for Health & Social Services at an event attended by the CIEH President and over 60 delegates. The Tool Kit has been circulated to all local authorities and Local Health Alliances in Wales and has been widely praised. The Welsh Assembly Government has commissioned a second volume of the Tool Kit to be launched in late 2006.

- 2.6 On 9th November the Welsh Assembly Government launched the new Corporate Health Standards for Wales. CIEH has been involved in developing the standards, and was asked to take an exhibition stand at the launch, promoting the Achieving Smoke Freedom Tool Kit, to which reference appears in the standards.
- 2.7 Working with WLGA /LACORS the Director has been able to secure funding for student training in Wales for 2005/6. £75K has been secured for funding BSc and MSc students undertaking environmental health courses, and students training to become TSOs, and £22k has been secured to fund work experience. The funding can be used to match fund payments made to students directly, to match fund payments made in kind, and to support the role of the training officers. The money to support work experience can also be used to support officers giving career talks in schools and colleges. At present there is not a commitment to further such funding for 2006/7, however local authorities are being encouraged to take up the funding so that a case for further funding can be made in April 2006. The Director is one of the panel that will determine bids for the funding.
- 2.8 In 2003 CIEH lead a group that drafted the Best Practice Standards for Wales, which have been in use for 12 months, and are currently being supplemented with additional Best Practice Areas. The Welsh Assembly Government working with the Wales Data Unit is reviewing the Performance Framework for Wales, and has been working with a number of professional groups to derive Performance Indicators for their operational areas. It has been impossible to derive meaningful Performance Indicators for Environmental Health Services that are outcome based and are delivered solely by environmental health services. It has therefore been agreed that there will be one indicator for environmental health services, that is to be linked to the Best Practice Standards document. The indicator will measure compliance by comparing actual service delivery levels with pre-selected delivery levels. This will allow environmental health departments to target resource at those service areas requiring greatest resource without skewing delivery to reflect artificial agendas, and will also take account of local priorities and need. This underlines the importance attached to the Best Practice Standards document, which is now being held up as an example of best practice to other professional groups.
- 2.9 The Director worked in collaboration with the WLGA on a number of Learning Exchanges relating to Excellence Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government scheme for promoting excellence in Local Authorities. These included a Learning Exchange relating to Improving Health and one relating to Regulatory Services. She has given a paper at the NI Making the Difference Conference and has conducted a training day as part of the NI professional training programme, and has attended meetings of the Occupational Standards Group for Wales and the Performance Measurement Framework group.

3.0 IMPLICATIONS

Financial:	Within existing resources
Personnel:	Within existing resources
Legal:	None
Environmental:	None
Equal Opportunities:	None
Public Relations:	None
Public Health:	None

Background Papers: None
Contact Officer: Director CIEH Wales.

