



### **What is Better Business for All?**

It's a local partnership between businesses, business support and regulators and across Devon & Somerset to promote local economic prosperity, whilst maintaining public protection.

Better Business for All aims to improve how regulatory services are delivered in Devon & Somerset and to show how working with your local regulators can save you time and money, improve your competitiveness and help you grow your business.

It's also about encouraging more businesses to seek advice from local regulators by highlighting the benefits of regulation to business, without fear of enforcement activity.

And it's about ensuring that regulatory staff better understand how businesses operate and the pressures you face.

Better Business for All is part of a national government initiative to reduce the regulatory burden on business. It is endorsed by the Better Regulation Delivery Office, which is part of the Department for Business Innovation and Skills.

Better Business for All is not a short term project but a better way of working, which is mutually beneficial in times of austerity and beyond.

The partnership is passionate about making a culture change between businesses and regulators, which encourages the building of trust to establish good working relationships.

### **Who's Involved?**

The project is being led by a steering group which includes local regulated businesses, the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, Better Regulation Delivery Office, Economic Development and representatives from a cross section of regulatory services in Devon & Somerset (including Environmental Health, Licensing, Trading Standards & Fire & Rescue).

There is also a regulatory services partnership with representatives from all 15 Local Authorities, Devon & Somerset Trading Standards & Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue.

The Partnership are determined to influence a behavioural change within regulation to ensure we have the right attitudes and behaviours to support local businesses; actively listening and embracing negative feedback from consultation and identifying new ways of working to turn the negatives into positives.

### **What's in it for me?**

- ✓ Better Business for All is business-focused, using business-led improvements to create better regulation, support business growth and create a level playing field for businesses
- ✓ A positive relationship between business and regulators is crucial to reducing both the perceived and real regulatory burden on business.
- ✓ Listening to businesses' needs and acting on it in an open and transparent way to help shape the way support is provided by local regulators
- ✓ Making sure you comply with the law will help your business be successful while protecting your customers and your reputation.

- ✓ We want to create an environment where businesses feel confident to seek advice from local regulators without fear of attracting enforcement activity.
- ✓ Regulators are a source of free, impartial and up-to-date support and advice for businesses
- ✓ We recognise that compliant businesses can be at a disadvantage if a more formal enforcement approach is not taken with non-compliant businesses. It is important that regulators are consistent and continue to take enforcement action when necessary in a fair and transparent way. This ensures both a level playing field for businesses as well as public protection.

#### Did you know?

- ? There are over 64,000 businesses across Devon & Somerset.
- ? Devon & Somerset Regulators have more than 40,000 contacts with businesses each year (phone/email/face to face).
- ? The vast majority of these contacts are to offer advice and guidance to help businesses comply with the law.
- ? Following a recent consultation with 198 local businesses 95% agreed that if their business was found to be non-compliant they would be concerned that this would affect their reputation with customers.

#### What have we done so far?

- Got business support across Devon & Somerset together to form the Better Business for All Partnership
- Created a [Steering Group](#) and [Regulatory Services Partnership](#) each with a Terms of Reference.
  
- Developed case studies of good practice to promote positive examples of regulators working with business. Please get in touch if you feel that your experience of a local regulator would make a good case study please contact us by email: [food.safety@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:food.safety@southsomerset.gov.uk).
- Written a workplan to give direction to the work of the Better Business for All Partnership
- Between January-March 2015 we consulted with 198 businesses across Devon & Somerset about regulators and regulation. The [results of the survey](#), both positive and negative, are being fed back to the appropriate regulators. The positive feedback will help to encourage, engage and motivate staff and the negative responses will highlight matters that must be addressed to improve service delivery.

Here are some of the findings:

*'Regulators have a limited understanding of the pressures faced by businesses'*

you said

*'Inconsistent application of the rules, this inevitably has financial implications and allows others to trade at an unfair competitive advantage'*

*'More meeting forums between business and regulators'*

we will

**Our workplan addresses all the matters arising from the business survey alongside actions and timescales.**

**you said**

67% of businesses agreed that regulators are consistent in the advice they provide and the way they enforce the law *'Based on our experience with the local environmental health visitor who exhibited excellent knowledge and understanding of our needs and demands'*

88% of businesses agreed that regulation helps to ensure a level playing field for businesses and consumers

86% of businesses agreed that it matters that their customers know that they invest in compliance

**we will**

Our ambition is 100% business satisfaction and in order to achieve that the Partnership will continue to work together with businesses to meet your needs.



## **Better Business for All**

*A local partnership between Businesses and Regulatory Services to promote growth*