

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Monitoring Report on the Delivery of the Food Law Enforcement and Health and Safety Service Plans
Meeting/Date:	Licensing and Protection Committee – 30th September 2020
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Councillor for Leisure and Regulatory Services – Cllr K Prentice
Report by:	Acting Operational Manager (Business) – Myles Bebbington
Ward(s) affected:	All.

Executive Summary:

The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan and Health and Safety Service Plan 2019-20 were approved by committee on 11 March 2020.

This monitoring report covers the Q1 figures from 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020. In general terms the monitoring report accounts for work undertaken by the Business Team within the defined period and compares this to the service plan to ensure that the service is on target to deliver the programmed work.

Programmed work is delivered alongside reactive work, the volume of which by definition is impossible to predict. This work is carried out according to risk. Complaints and accident investigations are prioritised using risk-based selection criteria, and the volume of work is reported here to attempt to identify any emerging risks in terms of resource provision.

The period April to June has been totally dominated by the current Covid 19 outbreak, Businesses and hospitality sectors have been closed which has significantly affected the ability to meet statutory requirements. The Food Standard Agency suspended all planned food safety inspections on the 20th March 2020.

Appendices 1 and 2 contain detailed information about the delivery of the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan. Appendix 3 contains detailed information about the delivery of the Health and Safety Service Plan.

Once Government authorises the food safety inspections to start, a plan of action will be developed by the team to address the backlog, however whilst Higher risk food premises will be the priority if inspections do not start in full

before August it is unlikely we will be able to meet the target set for the year 2020/21

Recommendation(s):

Note progress and provide any comments considered appropriate, on the delivery of the two Service Plans for the period 1st April to 30th June 2020.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The report provides information about the delivery of the two Service Plans for the cumulative figures for the year between 1st April 2020 and 30th June 2020.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY

- 2.1 Members have asked to be kept informed about the delivery of the work in the approved plans.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES COVERED BY THE REPORT

- 3.1 Food Law Enforcement consists of the following areas of work:

- Planned activities such as routine inspections of food businesses, food and environmental sampling and the provision of food hygiene training courses;
- Unplanned (reactive) work such as the investigation of customer complaints, dealing with requests for compliance advice and following up notifications of food poisoning;
- Liaison with other departments in the interests of coordinated service delivery: in particular licensing and planning;
- Supporting national strategies and the wider public health agenda.
Text.

- 3.2 Health and Safety regulation consists of these areas of work:

- Planned activities such as unannounced inspections of high risk businesses and targeted interventions in line with the HSE's strategic aims;
- Unplanned (reactive) work such as the investigation of notifiable accidents, prescribed diseases, complaints and dealing with serious risks that are identified during other activities (Matters of Evident Concern);
- The provision of compliance advice to businesses.

4. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 4.1 Under normal circumstances the failure to monitor the delivery of the approved Service Plans could invite criticism from the Food Standards Agency and the Health and Safety Executive in their capacities as the national regulators.
- 4.2 Members have asked to be kept informed about the delivery of the approved Service Plans in order that they can comment on the way in which the service is provided as well as the available resources.

5. ACTIONS AND PROGRESS AGAINST THE APPROVED PLANS

- 5.1 Appendices 1 and 2 relate to the delivery of the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan.
- 5.2 Appendix 1 compares the recorded activity in each of the programmed work service areas with the predicted activity in the approved Service Plan. The key activities of compliance revisits, approved premises inspections and other proactive visits are all Red due to the suspension of all inspections. However a programme of remote “virtual” inspections have been rolled out so that when physical inspections resume we can re-assess the risk status of premises to identify better which premises need to be inspected most urgently
- 5.3 A higher number of new food business registrations have been received since May 2020, which are being processed virtually to enable premises to take advantage of the relaxing and reopening of certain business types.
- 5.4 The alternative enforcement strategy is currently at red; this is not however an immediate concern as these are our very low risk premises that are assessed by means other than visits and will be followed up throughout the remainder of the year.
- 5.5 The focus in the last quarter has been to target new business registrations and interventions remotely which has been successful and is Green. Official controls via remote inspections have been undertaken in all high-risk premises (A and B) bar one which was due to Covid 19, however all premises will require a shortened physical visit in due course.
- 5.6 Appendix 2 refers to the unplanned (reactive) work undertaken by the service. The number of customer complaints and service requests is driven by demand which has been reduced due to the current situation, these figures will prove volatile in 2020-21 as a result of Covid 19 due to most reports of food poisoning traditionally being from food consumed at home
- 5.7 The food hygiene training programme has now been suspended but there is a commitment by the team to re-establish these as soon as possible.

5.6 The Health and Safety Service Plan would normally contain a mixture of programmed work, reactive work and the provision of compliance information and advice. However as planned inspections have also been suspended due to Covid 19 and work has only been reactive, which due to the number of business closures has been limited. The reopening of a range of businesses from June 2020 has led to queries around social distancing which is expected to occupy most of our Health and Safety work for the foreseeable future.

5.7 During Covid the main health and safety queries have been around social distancing in the workplace, which has resulted in a steady stream of advice being given by the team, at the time of writing the report the food and licensing teams have dealt with over 200 complaints and/or requests for advice.

5.8 The team have been heavily involved in producing guidance and information relating to reopening our town centres, providing guidance for Food business reopening, along with businesses such as Barbers, Tattooists, Nail bars etc

5.9 Further work has and continues to be done around track and trace work as required.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

6.1 These reporting arrangements support the wider corporate objectives to

- Create, protect and enhance our safe built environment
- Support people to improve their health and wellbeing
- Accelerate business growth and remove barriers to growth

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 No consultations required as part of this report

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None.

9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The failure to report the delivery of the approved Service Plans may prejudice the Council's ability to provide the necessary resources.

10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

11.1 To keep Members informed about the delivery of the approved Service Plans.

12. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Food Safety Service Plan: programmed (proactive) Activity

Appendix 2 – Food Safety Service Plan: Reactive Activity

Appendix 3 - Health and Safety Activity

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