

**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 – September 2021

**Executive Portfolio:** Executive Councillor for Leisure and Regulatory Services – Cllr K Prentice

**Report by:** Acting Operational Manager (Business) – Myles Bebbington

**Ward(s) affected:** All.

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### **Executive Summary:**

The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan and Health and Safety Service Plan 2021-22 were approved by Committee on 10 March 2021.

This monitoring report covers the Q1 figures from 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021. 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 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 due to Covid and did not permit planned inspections to resume until Mid June 2021, so figures shown reflect only high risk inspections where an immediate reactive intervention was required

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.

### **Recommendation:**

**Note progress and provide any comments considered appropriate, on the delivery of the two Service Plans for the period 1 April to 30 June 2021.**

## **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 1 April 2021 and 30 June 2021.

## **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 limited 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 New food business registrations, particularly home based continue to be received, these are being processed virtually to enable premises to take advantage of the relaxing and reopening of businesses from April 2021.
- 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 first quarter has been to target new business registrations and interventions which has been successful and moved from Amber to Green.
- 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 continue to prove volatile in 2021-22 as a result of Covid 19 due to most reports of food poisoning traditionally being from food consumed at home but a more predictable pattern is expected to emerge during Q2 and Q3 in line with previous years
- 5.7 The food hygiene training programme remains suspended but there is a commitment by the team to re-establish these as soon as possible once full staffing levels are in place during Q3 and Q4.
- 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 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 April 21 has led to queries around social

distancing which is expected to occupy most of our Health and Safety work for the foreseeable future.

## **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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