

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 – 10 November 2021

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

Report by: Finlay Flett, Operational Manager (People)

Ward(s) affected: All.

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 Q2 figures from 1 July 2021 to 30 September 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 July to September has seen a degree of normality resume with Businesses and hospitality sectors reopening and full physical inspections taking place. The Food Standard Agency permitted all planned food safety inspections to resume Mid June 2021. However it is worth noting that a full compliment of officers was not achieved until the end of the period.

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 1st July to 30th September 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 1st July 2021 and 30th September 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 11 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 previous suspension of all inspections. However, a programme of inspections has been rolled out so that we can re-assess the risk status of premises to identify better which premises need to be inspected most urgently moving forward and change the status from red to amber as soon as possible

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 second quarter has been to target new business registrations and interventions which has been successful. And remains Green.

5.6 In addition, a programme of physical inspections has resumed that will look at our higher risk A`s and B`s as well as inspecting any premises that had been identified as higher risk as part of previous remote inspections, A programme has been agreed with the Food Standards Agency to have all current and outstanding A & B inspections completed by June 2022.

5.7 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 remains unpredictable 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 emerging during Q2 and is expected to continue in Q3 in line with previous years

5.8 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 suspended due to Covid 19 have no recommenced, however no proactive plan has been put in place as it is considered that resources should be directed at food safety issues and only reactive inspections will take place at present.

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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