
Licensing and Protection Panel

Report of the meeting held on 20 October 2015.

Matters for Information

5. SERVICE PLAN FOR FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY MONITORING

The Panel has received an update on progress being made against the Council's Food Safety and Health and Safety Service Plans for 2015/16.

Members have expressed their concerns that the Service is behind target on the delivery of the Food Safety Service Plan. This is a direct result of a number of factors including staffing resources, two significant accident investigations, the impact of an unforeseen reactive workload, a higher than expected increase in the number of new food business and a higher than anticipated level of formal enforcement actions being undertaken.

Members have discussed specifically the number of planned food hygiene inspections, which are significantly behind schedule. Having noted the reasons for this, the options which are available to address the situation and the actions which may be taken by the Food Standards Agency if the Authority fails to meet its statutory targets, the Panel has been informed that the matter will be discussed further by the Corporate Management Team. Members have also been assured that the Executive Member for Strategic Economic Development and Legal is aware of the situation.

In recognition of Members' concerns and in view of the time until the Panel's next meeting, the Head of Community has undertaken to update the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman on the situation on a regular basis. Members have also agreed that further information should be circulated to the Panel as and when it becomes available. Panel Members have suggested that the Authority should work with Further Education providers if there is a wider recruitment issue and have expressed their support for the use of apprenticeships / work placement training schemes to enable the establishment of a sustainable workforce.

In reviewing the other specific performance indicators within the Plan, the Panel has noted that there has been an increase in food related service requests and notifications for infectious disease control. Members have been pleased to note that the number of Food Hygiene revisits and the number of alternative enforcement interventions remains on target and that the number of required

inspections of temporary food business has not been as high as originally foreseen. It is expected that activity within the Primary Authority Partnership with the Cambridgeshire School Service will increase in the next quarter.

With regard to Health and Safety premises inspections, Members have noted that whilst this was behind target, most of the preparatory work in connection with targeted health and safety interventions has been completed and the Head of Community is confident that the Authority would be back on target by the end of the year.

Overall, Members have welcomed the preparation of a monitoring report to enable the Panel to monitor the delivery of the Food Safety and Health and Safety Service Plans throughout the year. However Members have made a number of suggestions with regard to additional information that they would like to see in future reports.

6. LICENSING AND PROTECTION APPLICATIONS SUB-GROUP

The Panel has noted details of the three meetings of the Applications Sub-Group that took place between 2nd July and 8th October 2015.

R Fuller
Chairman