

Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title:	Monitoring Report on the Delivery of the Food Law Enforcement and Health and Safety Service Plans
Meeting/Date:	Licensing and Protection Committee – 19 June 2017
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Councillor for Housing and Regulatory Services - Cllr Ryan Fuller
Report by:	Operational Manager (Business) – Susan Walford
Ward(s) affected:	All

Executive Summary:

The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan and Health and Safety Service Plan 2017-18 are separate items on this agenda for approval by committee.

This monitoring report covers the period from 1 April 2017 to 19 June 2017. The period before 1 April is covered in the review of the 2016-17 service plan contained within the reports above. 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 number of start-up businesses and the turnover of ownership amongst some sectors of the food industry (especially takeaways) understandably places unpredictable demands on resources. New food businesses must be visited as soon as possible after they start to trade to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities to produce safe and wholesome food.

Corporate Performance Indicator PI20 refers to the percentage of newly registered food businesses which are inspected within 28 days of registration and the target for 2017-18 is 50%.

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(s):

Members are requested to:-

1. Comment on the delivery of the two Service Plans for the period 1 April 2017 to 19 June 2017
2. Consider the frequency of further reports to future meetings.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The report provides information about the delivery of the two Service Plans for the period between 1 April 2017 and 19 June 2017.

2. WHY IS THE REPORT NECESSARY?

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

3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES COVERED BY THE REPORT

- 3.1 Food Law Enforcement consists of these areas of work:
 - a) Planned activities such as routine inspections of food businesses, food and environmental sampling and the provision of food hygiene training courses;
 - b) Unplanned (reactive) work such as the investigation of customer complaints, dealing with requests for compliance advice and following up notifications of food poisoning;
 - c) Liaison with other departments in the interests of coordinated service delivery: in particular licensing and planning;
 - d) Supporting national strategies and the wider public health agenda.
- 3.2 Health and Safety regulation consists of these areas of work:
 - a) Planned activities such as unannounced inspections of high risk businesses and targeted interventions in line with the HSE's strategic aims;
 - b) 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);
 - c) The provision of compliance advice to businesses.

4. PROGRESS AGAINST THE APPROVED PLANS

- 4.1 Appendices 1 and 2 relate to the delivery of the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan.
- 4.2 Appendix 1 compares the recorded activity in each of the programmed work service areas with the predicted activity in the approved Service Plan.
- 4.3 The key activities of scheduled inspections, compliance revisits, inspections of new businesses and sampling visits are either green or amber.
- 4.4 The provision of information, advice and training is an important part of the service. Business advice is an integral part of every inspection this is supported by a programme of food hygiene courses aimed at people who work in food businesses and for whom appropriate training is vital to protect public health. Since April this year we have been unable to hold any courses as the accredited exam body has been reviewing their course content to ensure it continues to be relevant to the market. It is hoped that we will be in a position to launch our new look programme over the summer. In a commercial vein we are also hoping to offer bespoke training to businesses who would like assistance training staff on in-house hygiene procedures.
- 4.5 A further primary authority proposition has been presented by a local business wishing to establish a partnership with the council. Discussions are on-going with both the business and Regulatory Delivery (the government department responsible for overseeing the scheme), to agree the scope and terms of the contract.
- 4.6 The service plan also refers to two new initiatives that are being explored for roll out by the team.

1. The first is related to Better Business for All, which aims to bring together businesses and regulators and involves the creation of local partnerships to identify the issues facing local businesses, and to then shape the provision of effective support by local regulators. It will involve all regulatory services often extending to planning and economic development as well as the GCGP-LEP signpost -2-grow and business representatives. The key objectives are :
 - to provide advice and support to business
 - increase business awareness of regulatory support
 - ensure effective co-ordination across regulatory services
 - simplify the local regulatory system and processes
 - reduce the regulatory burden on businesses
 - establish partnerships between regulatory services and local businesses.

2. The second is the public health led Healthier Options programme which aims to see healthier food and drink options for people to choose from when eating out and about. Small and medium sized food businesses will be supported by the Business Team to participate in this free membership award scheme. The primary aim is to persuade Businesses to pledge their unique intentions for changes to food preparation techniques and menus around key areas to;
 - i. Reduce portion sizes.
 - ii. 'Change the default' *make the standard option the healthier option*
 - iii. Reduce sugar, fat and salt
 - iv. Increase fruit and vegetables

The service also uses social media to promote good practice, good news stories and to support the FSA's strategic aims whenever practicable.

- 4.6 Appendix 2 refers to the unplanned (reactive) work. The number of customer complaints and service requests is driven by demand, so they are closely monitored and prioritised according to risk using publicly available selection criteria. Any intelligence emerging around trends can be used to inform proactive work through education or enforcement action.

- 4.7 The Health and Safety Service Plan also contains a mixture of programmed work, reactive work and the provision of compliance information and advice.

- 4.8 There do not appear to be any emerging issues at this point however it is important that complaints are considered according to risk and approached in a proportionate manner. The number of complaints and service requests is monitored closely and it may be necessary to introduce some selection criteria if the numbers continue to rise. Accident investigations are already selected according to established selection criteria. The recent work place death reported at Hamerton Zoo is being investigated by the team and has already involved considerable officer time.

- 4.9 Officers continue to witness serious health and safety problems whilst carrying out other duties. These are identified as "Matters of Evident Concern" (MEC). The frequency with which they are reported is an indication of the extent to which businesses fail to manage serious risks without our intervention.

5. RISKS

- 5.1. 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.

- 5.2. 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.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

6.1. These reporting arrangements support the wider corporate objectives to “*Improve the efficiency of service delivery and become more business-like*” and to “*drive service priorities*”.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

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

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. None.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

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

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Food Safety Service Plan: Programmed (proactive) Activity

Appendix 2 - Food Safety Service Plan: Reactive Activity

Appendix 3 - Health and Safety Activity

CONTACT OFFICERS

Mr Chris Stopford
Head of Community
Tel: 01480 388280

Mrs Susan Walford
Operational Manager (Business)
Tel 01480 388002