

Title of Report	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH - FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2021/22	
Presented by	Councillor Andrew Woodman Community Services Portfolio Holder	
Background Papers	Food Standards Agency – Food Law Code of Practice (England) (Issue March 2021) Food Standards Agency – Food Law Practice Guidance (England) (Issue March 2021)	Public Report: Yes Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	The draft service plan can be delivered within the allocated budget 2021/22.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	<p>When providing the Food Safety function, the council must have regard to the 'Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities'.</p> <p>Chapter 1 paragraph 3 of the Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities states "Authorities have the flexibility to decide locally whether or not service plans should be approved at Member level. To help to ensure local transparency and accountability, and to show their contribution to the authority's corporate plan, feed and food service plans and performance reviews should be approved at the relevant level established for that local authority, whether that is Member, Member forum, or suitably delegated senior officer level. Records should be kept to show that service plans have received appropriate approval."</p> <p>Chapter 2 paragraph 3.2 states "A performance review shall be carried out by the Authority at least once a year based on the service delivery plan, documented and submitted for approval to either the relevant member forum or, where approval and management of service delivery plans has been delegated to senior officers, to the relevant senior officer."</p> <p>This is not a function which appears in schedule 1 of the Local Authority (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, therefore, this is a Cabinet function. In the absence of a delegation within the Constitution, this function therefore remains a Council function.</p>	

	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes
Staffing and Corporate Implications	No staffing implications have been identified.
	Signed off by the Deputy Head of Paid Service: Yes
Purpose of Report	To inform Members of the content of the Food Safety Service Plan 2021/22 and to report on performance against the 2020/21 Service Delivery Plan
Reason for Decision	To approve the content of the Food Safety Service Plan 2021/22 as required by the Food Standards Agency.
Recommendations	<p>(1) THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2021/22 APPENDED TO THIS REPORT BE APPROVED</p> <p>(2) THAT THE PERFORMANCE AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020/21 BE NOTED</p>

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Food Safety function is delivered by the Environmental Health team. When providing the Food Safety function, the council must have regard to the 'Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities' ("the Framework Agreement") which sets out the standards agreed with the Food Standards Agency.
- 1.2 The Framework Agreement requires each food safety service to document and implement a Food Safety Service Plan ("Service Plan") in accordance with the Codes of Practice. In addition, a documented performance review of the plan is required to be carried out at least once a year. The Framework Agreement requires the Service Plan, together with the performance review to be submitted for member approval to ensure local transparency and accountability.
- 1.3 The Environmental Health Food Safety Service Plan 2021/22 is attached at Appendix 1. Paragraphs 3 and 4 below detail a summary of the activity planned in 2021/22. Paragraph 5 provides a summary of the successes from 2020/21.

2.0 LINKS TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND OUTCOMES

- 2.1 The work of the food safety service links to two of the Council priorities, *Support for businesses* and *Our communities are safe, healthy, and connected*.

Support for businesses: The provision of regulatory advice and guidance provides a business with the confidence to grow. For example: Regulatory advice can result in a business saving money by avoiding gold plated compliance; By seeking advice from a regulator before opening or expanding, a business can avoid spending money in areas which fail to comply with the law; Regulatory advice provides a business with reassurance and peace of mind; Regulatory advice is free, avoiding a business the cost of appointing a private sector consultant; Regulatory advice from a local government officer is viewed by business as 'straight from the horse's mouth', and can be relied upon.

Our communities are safe, healthy, and connected: The work of the service helps ensure our residents and visitors have safe and healthy places to work, eat and enjoy.

3.0 MAIN FOCUS OF THE 2021/22 PLAN

- A programme of 824 food safety interventions consisting of inspection, auditing, and sampling. Priority will be given to new food premises awaiting their first food hygiene inspection and known high risk establishments (Risk category A and B). (Paragraph 4.1.1 of Service Plan).
- A programme of food safety inspections/coaching visits targeting a selection of non-compliant food establishments (Paragraph 4.1.2 of Service Plan);
- The provision of support to HMS Host UK Limited under a Primary Authority Partnership (Paragraph 4.3);
- Investigation of food and food premises complaints (Paragraph 4.2), and all outbreaks and incidents of food related illnesses (Paragraph 4.6);
- The provision of information and advice on food safety to businesses and customers (Paragraph 4.4);
- A coordinated food, water, and environmental sampling programme (Paragraph 4.5);
- The issuing of export certificates (Paragraph 4.8);
- To operate the inspection facility at East Midlands Airport (Paragraph 4.9). Prior to 1 October 2021, all products of animal origin and certain foods not of animal origin arriving at East Midlands Airport from a country outside the European Union will be inspected. From 1 October 2021 new checks will be introduced on certain foodstuffs from the European Union. Catch certificates for fish and fishery products entering the EU via East Midlands Airport will be issued;
- To support businesses in their recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic by providing advice and guidance relating to complying with the easing of restrictions;
- To promote the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme for food establishments within the district. Food establishments will be encouraged to display their rating; (Paragraph 4.11)

4.0 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS 2021/22

- 4.1 The food industry is regulated by a range of legislation that aims to keep our food safe. Officers' work with food businesses is focussed on helping them comply with food safety legislation and offering support and advice. This is seen as a critical area of our work by central government and the compliance levels of food establishments in the district are monitored and used as a measure of how our work impacts on business safety.
- 4.2 Following an inspection, an establishment is awarded a food hygiene rating ranging from 0 to 5, 0 being urgent improvement necessary, 3 being generally satisfactory and 5 being very good standards.
- 4.3 The hygiene ratings of food businesses fluctuate throughout the year with some businesses receiving an improved rating and others declining in standards. A target has been set to reduce the number of food businesses with a hygiene rating of 0,1 or 2 to 15.

5.0 PERFORMANCE AGAINST 2020/21 SERVICE PLAN

- 5.1 Impact of Covid-19 on inspection programme

The Environmental Health Officers and Food Safety Officer responsible for delivering the food safety service plan have been heavily involved in the response to Covid-19. During the lockdown many of the businesses scheduled for inspections were forced to close. The focus of resource at this time was given to monitoring the business closures and responding to concerns raised by members of the public. As we move through the steps of the Government's roadmap to easing restrictions the team experience a high demand from business owners requesting guidance on how to re-open safely. The food safety team provide support to businesses by guiding them to make their premises covid-secure.

The impact of Covid-19 on the food inspection programme meant that on 31 March 2021, 448 planned food interventions were outstanding. Additional, temporary resource will be used to recover from the inspection backlog.

5.2 Successes

Despite the significant impact of Covid-19, the number of establishments requiring improvement (rated 0,1 and 2) decreased from 20 to 16 during 2020/21. This success was achieved through the provision of advice and guidance given to business owners by Environmental Health Officers.

On 1 April 2021 there were 738 registered food businesses within our district, within the scope of the national food hygiene rating scheme. 722 of the 738 (97.8%) food businesses have a hygiene rating of 3, 4 or 5 (satisfactory standards or better). The profile of the food establishments by hygiene rating is as follows:

Food Hygiene Rating	Number of food establishments
0 – Urgent improvement necessary	0
1 – Major improvement necessary	10
2 – Improvement necessary	6
3 – Generally satisfactory	22
4 – Good	91
5 – Very Good	609

All the priority activities identified by the Food Standards Agency were delivered, namely: checks carried out at East Midlands airport border control post; response to food incidents and outbreaks; inspections at approved food premises; response to complaints; enforcement actions and follow up visits.

87% of high-risk food establishments (risk category A and B detailed within the food hygiene rating system) received a food hygiene inspection.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for businesses and helping people into local jobs. - Our communities are safe, healthy, and connected.
Policy Considerations:	No council policy considerations
Safeguarding:	None
Equalities/Diversity:	None
Customer Impact:	The work programme will ensure that food produced and consumed in NWL is safe
Economic and Social Impact:	Advice provided to businesses will support the economic recovery from Covid-19
Environment and Climate Change:	No impact
Consultation/Community Engagement:	None required
Risks:	No significant risks identified
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