



## AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Democratic Services

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12 September 2019

### ENVIRONMENT AND LIVING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee will be held at **6.30 pm on Tuesday 24 September 2019** in **The Paralympic Room, Aylesbury Vale District Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF**, when your attendance is requested.

**Membership:** Councillor S Jenkins (Chairman); Councillors B Everitt (Vice-Chairman), M Bateman, S Chapple, A Cole, S Cole, P Cooper, B Foster, T Hunter-Watts, S Jarvis and R King

Contact Officer for meeting arrangements: Craig Saunders; [csaunders@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk](mailto:csaunders@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk)

### AGENDA

**1. APOLOGIES**

**2. TEMPORARY CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP**

Any changes will be reported at the meeting.

**3. MINUTES** (Pages 3 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June, 2019.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members to declare any interests.

**5. UPDATE ON HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2019-2022** (Pages 11 - 40)

To consider the attached report.

Contact Officer: Elaine Hassall (01296) 585364

**6. FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2019-20** (Pages 41 - 70)

To consider the attached report.

Contact Officer: Jacqui Bromilow (01296) 585498

## **7. WORK PROGRAMME**

To consider the future work programme. Meetings are scheduled as follows:

**3 December 2019** – No agenda items as yet.

**10 February 2020** – No agenda items as yet.

Members have expressed an interest in the following coming to Committee:

- Aylesbury Garden Town Update
- Update on HS2 Infrastructure work

## Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee

25 JUNE 2019

**PRESENT:** Councillors B Everitt (Vice-Chairman), S Chapple, A Cole, S Cole, B Foster and R King.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors P Irwin, D Lyons, A Macpherson and M Winn.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors M Bateman, P Cooper, T Hunter-Watts and S Jarvis.

### 1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Mrs Jenkins be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

### 2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Everitt be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

### 3. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

### 4. BUCKS COUNTY COUNCIL - HIGHWAYS UPDATE

The Committee welcomed Mr Keith Carpenter (Highways Asset Manager, Transport for Buckinghamshire) who had been invited to give an update on Buckinghamshire County Council's Highways Infrastructure Management Policies insofar as they related to Aylesbury Vale in particular and across the County generally. These policies described the principles adopted and applied to achieve the County Council's highways maintenance objectives. Mr Carpenter was accompanied by Councillor Irwin, the County Council's Deputy Cabinet Member for Transportation.

To give some context to the presentation, the Committee was advised as follows:-

- The County highways network stretched from busy areas inside the M25 to the more rural north of the County.
- There were around 3,200km of highways, over half of which were smaller roads, including 2,480km of footways, 6,000 illuminated signs, in excess of 28,000 street lights and 500 bridges.

The approved Asset Management Policy and Strategy set out how the County Council would maintain a safe road network, maximise carriageway availability, optimise the use of and protect natural resources and improve accessibility for all. There were a number of performance measures against which the success of dealing with defects within previously determined timescales could be assessed.

Road condition was measured for the classified road network using nationally recognised methods which recorded the condition of sections of road as red (worst), amber or green (best). Due to the timing of surveys they sometimes lagged behind the actual condition but the impact of increased investment was showing steady improvements across all classifications of roads over the last five years.

Unclassified roads were surveyed slightly differently, with categories being either poor or adequate. In 2013/2014, 33% of unclassified roads were in a poor condition compared to 29% in 2018/2019. Around 20% of footways were considered to be in poor condition, although for the more important footways, over 90% were either in good or fair condition.

Works to strategic roads were data led and by engagement with various stakeholders, including local elected Members and the County Council's own Local Area Technicians. From the data sources used, a list of potential or candidate schemes was created.

Every year a proportion of roads were surveyed. For local roads this involved a visual inspection which collected information such as cracking or subsidence. For strategic roads, a more sophisticated approach was taken, using a specialist vehicle which deployed remote monitoring equipment. The data was then loaded into specialist software and mapped against the condition of the rest of the network.

The data was converted to a scoring system as described earlier in this Minute. The software used the defects identified to suggest an appropriate treatment and give an indicative cost of repair. There were, at the time the Committee report had been prepared 1,393 potential schemes on the strategic network.

The maintenance strategy adopted by the County Council recognised that prevention was better than cure. There were some types of defect which could not be left for safety reasons, whilst others could be repaired temporarily (and more cheaply) to prevent further deterioration. The County Council ensured that a proportion of the overall budget was spent on preventative repair/maintenance. This explained why, on some occasions, work was seen to be undertaken on roads that did not look as bad as others. This offered best value for money.

Schemes were usually ranked as follows:-

- Classification hierarchy.
- Condition data.
- Public requests.
- Reactive spend.
- Insurance claims.
- Safety (skid resistance).

As previously indicated, for local roads, the condition data was cruder. Also experience had shown that local knowledge, particularly from elected Members, was vital in determining actions/priorities. Members were however also consulted in relation to strategic schemes within their areas. Indeed, they were often asked to suggest priorities.

In summary a balanced approach was taken between prevention and cure and a different strategy applied to strategic and local roads. This enabled a list of priorities to be created for each County Electoral Division. These priorities were then combined with all strategic schemes to create a four year rolling programme. This enabled opportunities for collaborative working with other areas to be explored. The rolling programme was renewed every year in the light of changing circumstances.

The County Council concentrated resources on dealing with footways considered to be in the worst condition. All highway structures were inspected periodically. Street lighting replacements were prioritised according to condition and much of the funding was invested in upgrades such as LED units. Traffic signal replacement and refurbishments were assessed against a range of factors such as age, condition and maintenance record.

Some capital funding was provided by the Department for Transport, part of which was incentivised. The remainder was provided directly by the County Council. Different predictive models were used to inform decision making, thus allowing priorities to be balanced across the different asset groups. The Medium Term Financial Planning process was run each year to re-assess these priorities. It was indicated that at present funding levels, all of the assets, except carriageways, were in a slow but steady managed decline. For carriageways, the funding allowed for some improvements which could be concentrated on local roads. Overall, the condition of carriageways had improved for all categories over the last five years or so. For main roads, the condition was comparable to that of highways in neighbouring Counties.

There were teams dedicated to inspecting and repairing all the County's roads. Every road was inspected from a slow moving vehicle by a team of two trained inspectors. Minor roads were inspected once a year and main roads inspected once a month. All types of defects were identified – not just potholes. Each defect was assessed by the inspectors or Local Area Technician and a response time designated. These inspections were geared towards safety. Response times ranged from two hours (emergencies) to 28 days (low risk). In some cases however, a repair was not required immediately and could be included in future work programmes. Sometimes a repair necessitated the closure of the highway and therefore could not be undertaken immediately.

The County Council's maintenance regime had been accredited by the British Standards Institute and the County had received full funding from the Department for Transport. Proactive planning also took place in order ensure the future resilience of the highway network and to take account of factors such as climate change and in the Vale, significant housing growth. Although the roads had been improved over the last five years, it was acknowledged that there was no room for complacency. There were almost 1,400 potential schemes on strategic roads alone and probably 3,000 in total.

Mr Carpenter and Councillor Irwin, as appropriate, responded to a number of questions/comments from Committee members, including the following:-

- It was confirmed that (as outline above) visual checks were undertaken. It was emphasised that local knowledge and reporting was however invaluable.
- Use was being made of new technology. For example LED units in street lamps and new resurfacing materials.
- It was indicated that potentially, potholes of the type illustrated in the presentation material took around two days to remedy. However, those considered to be a serious safety hazard would be repaired often within two hours.

- Members appreciated being advised of the statistical data included within the presentation, which they felt would be helpful to them in explaining the highways maintenance strategies to Town/Parish Councils.
- Climate change and the need to protect the local environment was factored into the maintenance regime. However the variation in the climate could affect the determination of what type of works were undertaken. Winter and Summer weather was no longer easily predictable.
- It was confirmed that efforts were continually being made to change travel habits to more environmentally friendly modes of transport to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and other climate warming gasses. Consideration was being given to the viability of park and ride schemes and improvements were being made to cycle ways. The Highways Team was involved in the planning of Aylesbury as a Garden Town. Greater use was also being made of recycled aggregates.
- Consideration was being given within the resources available to increasing the number of electric vehicle charging points.
- It was confirmed that there was an on-going maintenance programme for highway signage. Also, efforts were being made to maintain safety standards through roadside tree surgery. However it needed to be recognised that it was not always possible to carry out this work when preferred as it was determined by the growing cycle.
- Wherever possible and where budgets allowed, every endeavour was being made to ensure that the repairs carried out had regard to the historic character of an area and the existing road materials.
- Where appropriate (and again within the limitations of the budget), and bearing in mind the positioning of underground utilities, tree planting along roadsides was undertaken.
- It was acknowledged that the transition to a unitary authority would improve the efficiency of future road maintenance planning.
- Reference was made to the need to engage with customers in connection with the number of likely vehicle movements associated with the transport of spoil and aggregates used in connection with the construction of the HS2 project. It was however indicated that getting firm information from HS2 Ltd on this aspect was proving to be difficult.
- Reference was made to the need to consider carefully the siting of controlled pedestrian crossings, which were often located close to roundabouts and other junctions.
- Brief reference was made to the decision to devolve some highway maintenance work to Parish Councils which was appreciated by local communities.

In conclusion, the Committee thanked Mr Carpenter and Councillor Irwin for allowing Members the opportunity to have a full and frank discussion on this matter.

## **5. PROPOSAL RELATING TO THE SCHEME OF ADDITIONAL LICENSING FOR HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMOS)**

House in multiple occupation could often be occupied by the most vulnerable in the community. The risk of fire, public health issues and overcrowding was greater than in other types of accommodation and resources were, in the main targeted at those which represented the highest risk.

The Housing Act, 2004 had first introduced the mandatory licensing of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). The Act also provided for licensing to be extended by local authorities to include HMOs not covered by mandatory licensing, known commonly as additional licensing.

The Council had introduced an additional licensing scheme in September 2014. The additional licensing scheme had designated the whole of the District and the additional component was the inclusion of properties where there were three or more occupants, as opposed to the mandatory threshold at the time of five. Additional licensing schemes had to be reviewed to ensure that they continued to be of benefit to occupiers and the community. Such a designation could last for a maximum of five years and AVDC's additional licensing scheme would expire in September, 2019.

In order to make a new designation, the Council had to collect evidence to support its case, apply to the MHCLG, undertake consultation and then wait three months for the designation to come into effect.

On 1 October, 2018, mandatory licensing had been extended to include properties with one or two stories, so that the standard test would now simply include a threshold of properties accommodating two or more households and five or more persons in total. In addition to the standard test, there were additional mandatory tests which remained unchanged, namely:-

- Buildings converted to self contained flats comprising three or more self contained flats.
- Buildings converted to be a mixture of self contained flats and non self contained accommodation.

Finally, changes introduced in October, 2018 had included new conditions for national minimum sleeping room sizes and waste disposal requirements. These would all take effect when existing licenses expired and were renewed.

It was reported that none of the other Buckinghamshire Districts currently operated additional HMO licensing schemes and there was therefore the opportunity for the new Buckinghamshire Council to bring forward a scheme for either all of, or designated areas of the County in due course should it choose to do so. The Committee report gave details of the differences in the standards tests for the old mandatory scheme, the current additional scheme and the new mandatory regime.

Of the 163 properties currently licensed by AVDC (mandatory and additional), only 43 would not be covered by the newer mandatory provisions... These were predominantly three/four bedroom, three/four person properties with concentrations in the wards of Buckingham North (14) and Buckingham South (7).

Members were advised that there were two broad options:-

**Option 1:** That the Council allows the additional licensing scheme for the Vale to expire in September, 2019, without commencing the process to re-designate part of or all of the District. As a result of the legislation change, and without the existence of an additional licensing scheme, 43 of the properties currently licensed under the additional scheme, would no longer be licensed at all.

The Council could however still take action against landlords in respect of properties outside the requirements of the mandatory scheme by using the powers contained in the Housing Act, 2004. Additionally, the Housing and Planning Act, 2016, also included powers to deal with rogue landlords. This would satisfy the MHCLG's requirement that local authorities should have considered what other courses of action would be available to deal with issues not covered by additional licensing schemes.

Those properties that would no longer require a license represented a lower risk and did not tend to be properties that required intensive enforcement activity. There was no reason to believe that this would change just because the additional licensing scheme was allowed to expire. Less than 3% of the complaints received last year related to those properties currently additionally licensed HMOs which would no longer be covered by mandatory licensing. Of these three complaints, one had related to the HMO exceeding its additional license conditions concerning the number of residents (meaning that it would become mandatorily licensed anyway). The other two complaints had not required any enforcement action.

The highest risk HMOs tended to be converted, older, three storey properties with more than five residents. These types of property would be covered by the new mandatory regime, but were often unlicensed. Anecdotally it was believed that less than half of the HMOs across the Vale were actually licensed and therefore resources would be better targeted at identifying and enforcing against unlicensed HMOs rather than additionally licensing lower risk properties.

There were transitional arrangements in place for existing additional licenses outside the scope of the new mandatory provisions, which meant that they would not automatically fall away in September, 2019. Instead they would run until the expiry of their five year additional license. This meant that conditions attached to these licences could still be enforced. Only seven of the 43 affected licenses expired before January, 2021, with many running for much longer.

**Option 2:** For the Council to proceed with exploring whether there was enough evidence to justify a specific area of the Vale for additional licensing (as opposed to the whole of the Vale), focusing on local intelligence and data matching of other Council held assets.

If the Council were to proceed, it had to be convinced that there was a justified case to do so and also it would be necessary to follow the consultation process. It could be that during the course of this fresh consultation exploration exercise there was justification to designate the whole of the Vale for additional licensing. However it was thought that this was unlikely because of the shift in regulatory focus by the Government.

The process required to apply to the MHCLG (even if it commenced before the expiration date) might not be completed before the expiry of the current additional scheme. Given the amount of work required to prepare for vesting day for the new unitary authority, it was felt that resources could be better used elsewhere.

Committee Members had an opportunity comment/seek clarity on a number of issues, including:-

- Members were anxious to ensure that any decision not to renew the additional scheme would not result in any vulnerable individuals falling through the net. Members were assured that officers had and were continuing to work with other agencies working in this field (such as social care, HMRC, Bucks Fire & Rescue and a modern slavery task force) allowing for the sharing of intelligence to identify unlicensed HMOs.
- It was confirmed that the Council would continue to be vigilant and it was indicated that officers across the environmental health sector were working together to identify potential problems. For example, the Council carried out numerous food outlet inspections each year and checks are being made where appropriate on the use of accommodation above such outlets.
- The proposal not to pursue the additional licensing arrangements would allow greater scope to identify and concentrate on identifying HMOs that were not licensed at all, were likely to have poor standards and require enforcement action.
- Any proposal not to renew the additional licensing regime would afford the new unitary authority the opportunity to consider a whole County approach.

Members concluded that in the light of the information available, it would not be appropriate to pursue renewal of the additional licensing regime and accordingly it was,

RESOLVED –

- (1) That non renewal of the additional licensing regime for HMOs after the expiry of the existing scheme in September, 2019, is supported.
- (2) That it be noted that the private sector housing unitary work stream would commence work on collecting management data to inform the new Buckinghamshire Council's approach to additional licensing designation post vesting day.

## **6. WORK PROGRAMME**

It was noted that the work programme provided for the following:-

### **Meeting on 24 September, 2019**

- Update on the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2019 – 2020
- Built Facilities Strategy
- Leisure Supplementary Guidance (subject to modifications consultation on the VALP)
- Food Service Plan (prior to a cabinet member Decision)

### **Meeting on 3 December, 2019**

There were no items identified as yet, but merit was seen in receiving reports on the following:-

- Update on HS2 Infrastructure work

- Impact of changes made to the domestic household recycling sites, particularly in relation to fly tipping.
- Aylesbury Garden Town Update.

## HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2019-2022

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 To present to Members progress on the Action Plan since the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2019-2022 was adopted in 2019. The Action Plan is attached as Appendix 1 of this report.

### 2 Recommendations/for decision

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 2.1 | That Members review and endorse the Housing and Homelessness Strategy action plan updates which includes progress and achievements up to the end of June 2019. |
| 2.2 | That Members are happy for the action plan updates to be uploaded onto the AVDC website for the public to view.  |

### 3 Executive summary (if longer than 2 pages)

- 3.1 The Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2019-2022 (the Strategy) was produced following a review of the housing and homelessness needs of residents within the Vale and outlines the Council's plan on addressing these needs for the next three years.

#### 3.2 Preparations for Unitary

The Housing Team is part of the countywide housing work stream and work is currently taking place on mapping of all contracts and processes. Information is being collated on existing stakeholder contracts to ensure that relationships will be maintained post Vesting Day.

Transitional provisions allow up to 24 months for a new countywide strategy to be produced. As the AVDC Housing and Homelessness Strategy is valid until 2022, the immediate focus is on maintaining business as usual for all clients referring into the service with an emphasis on providing a consistent approach regardless of which "front door" the client enters. Beyond this, a new county-wide strategy will start to be developed that will continue to uphold the positive contribution that AVDC and the other districts have made to homelessness in the Vale.

- 3.3 Four strategic aims were identified and below are highlighted notable achievements within each of the aims during the period of January to June 2019.

#### **Strategic Aim No 1 – the Prevention of Rough Sleeping**

- 3.4 In February 2019 the number of rough sleepers fell below 10. However on the most recent count in May 2019 there were 17 identified rough sleepers. The annual statutory counts are made publicly available. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2018>). Numbers continue to present a challenge, particularly new flow (new rough sleepers), which has far exceeded expectation. Although a significant increase locally, an increase is reflected in all other authorities. However, data on rough sleepers is complex and fluid and cannot be viewed in isolation of the work conducted to support those at risk from homelessness.
- 3.5 Rough Sleeper Initiative counts are conducted bi-monthly and are closely scrutinised against the detailed Rough Sleeper action plan, which is a living document and regularly reviewed. A significant challenge remains with a lack of high needs supported accommodation within the county.

- 3.6 Implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act continues to place demands on the Housing Team as more complex recording of data is required.
- 3.7 During our Winter Emergency Provision, we partnered with Riverside Housing who manage our temporary accommodation at Bearbrook, to provide local emergency accommodation during the coldest periods and this proved to be a successful partnership.
- 3.8 In February 2019, the first properties were supplied and released by Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust as part of a housing first type model for medium risk clients.
- 3.9 Arising from lessons learnt from the Building Resilience Pilot, the Districts have funded a county-wide short-term Prison/Probation and Housing Liaison Officer contract provided by Connection Support, to ensure prisons meet their statutory Duty to Refer, which came into effect in October 2019.

The Housing Team are closely monitoring referrals from the prison service to ensure they are complying with the Duty to Refer requirement.

- 3.10 The Tenancy Sustainment Contract managed by Bucks County Council has been extended to include support for new tenants.

**Strategic Aim No 2 - To facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**

- 3.11 The number of new affordable homes, for the period January to June 2019 was 155 new units. There is no statutory obligation to provide a target of new affordable homes but local authorities can set their own internal estimates. Due to a number of factors such as delays in development and processing of legal documentation there is often slippage. However our aim is to provide the maximum number of new affordable homes as possible. According to the Government's Affordable Housing Supply statistics 2017-18 Aylesbury consistently achieves more new affordable homes than the other districts in the county. We are also exploring shared equity loans in Haddenham.
- 3.12 We are looking to bring forward a number of social rented houses. The current figure is 34 but is subject to change as we cannot predict the exact number of completions of approved units by end March 2020.
- 3.13 A proportion of the new homes bonus has been ring-fenced for the delivery of new affordable housing.
- 3.14 The Accommodation Officer post, which was funded through the Rough Sleeper Initiative is working well to manage and maximise the provision of our temporary accommodation at Griffin Place. Client support is provided at Griffin Place by the charity Barnados.
- 3.15 Bucks Home Choice, the social housing allocation policy for Bucks, has been reviewed and the new policy will go live on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019.
- 3.16 The Environmental Health Team successfully prosecuted landlords in breach of HMO Licensing rules. The team continues to work closely with the police and other agencies to act on intelligence and public concerns about either licensed or unlicensed properties.
- 3.17 A draft masterplan for Aylesbury Garden Town is currently being developed. Reference will be made to housing and homelessness challenges experienced by Aylesbury residents to support future local plan policies as part of the new unitary authority.

### **Strategic Aim No 3 - Responding to the ongoing challenges of welfare reform**

- 3.18 The Revenue and Benefits team continue to support Universal Credit (UC) Claimants and have forged closer working with the housing team to mitigate its effects and have helped prevent instances of homelessness.
- 3.19 The Housing Debt Advice team have seen increased referrals from those in financial difficulty including those in receipt of direct payments. The team work closely with the Housing Benefits Team to enable access to the Discretionary Housing Payment fund and improvements have been made to the fund to help streamline the decision making process.

The fund is used to help supplement housing benefit or UC where there is a shortfall between the housing benefit and the cost of rent. A Supreme Court ruling in April this year, upheld that tenants who are unable to make up this shortfall should not be forced to spend subsistence benefits (i.e. money intended for their and their children's most basic daily living needs such as food and heating) on rent to avoid homelessness. To this end, there has been an increase use of this fund.

Since April 2019, Citizens Advice deliver a service called "Help to Claim" for customers who require extra support when making a new UC claim or moving onto UC. The service offers tailored, practical support throughout a customer's claim until they receive their first full correct payment. This means AVDC are no longer helping clients with budgeting support or assisted digital support with new claims.

### **Strategic Aim no 4 - Contribute to the improvement of health and wellbeing services for people at risk of homelessness**

- 3.20 The Mental Health Nurse post within the Housing Team is working well to identify homeless people who have mental health needs and liaises with mental health services to ensure they receive appropriate and timely referrals.
- 3.21 The Housing Team have met with the Clinical Commissioning Group, who do not have a Duty to Refer, to explain the need for GP's to identify to the Housing team, patients at risk of homelessness, at the earlier opportunity and how to refer those at risk to the Housing Service.

#### **New legislation and consultations**

The following new pieces of legislation were introduced this year:

- 3.22 The Homes Act (Fitness for Habitation) came into force on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019, which gives additional rights to tenants who live in social or privately rented houses and flats.
- 3.23 A draft Domestic Abuse Bill was published on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019 together with a consultation document.
- 3.24 In addition, AVDC Officers have responded to the following Government Consultations:
- Tackling Homelessness, which sought the views of homelessness partners on the effectiveness of existing non-statutory and statutory local accountability and partnership structures and how these might be improved.

- A call for evidence on the statutory principles of the Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice and how it can be best refined and improved to reflect current needs.
- A call for evidence on considering the case for a Housing Court.
- MHCLG Allocations Evidence Collection Exercise (linked to recommendations within the Social Housing Green Paper)
- Improving access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces, Veterans and their families.

## **Conclusion**

Much has been achieved in the period since the new Housing and Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan was approved. Officers continue to balance business as usual against their involvement on unitary work streams as well as keeping a watching brief on any impact arising from Brexit and the effect that a “no deal” scenario may have on housing and homelessness such as a change in the eligibility criteria for immigration status of some EU Nationals. Housing and Homelessness continues to be a priority for many services within the Council and considerable efforts have been made to improve and identify opportunities, for closer working between them.

## **4 Supporting information**

4.1 The Housing and Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2022.

## **5 Resource implications**

5.1 None

Contact Officer Elaine Hassall, Strategy and Partnerships Officer 01296 585364  
Background Documents – Appendix 1 Action Plan updates June 2019

**Strategic Aim - 9.1 Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping**

**Outcome: Those at risk of homelessness are able to access interventions at the right time in the right way and secure stable accommodation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>Identify current and future trends of homelessness in the Vale.</b>	Regularly review and monitor trends in relation to the following data sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• homelessness casework records and other local sources of data;</li> <li>• high level national statistical data returns (currently H-CLIC)</li> <li>• equality monitoring data, including that relating to homelessness applications and outcomes</li> </ul>	AVDC Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum, Strategy & Partnership Team	Quarterly	TBA	Currently developing a set of performance indicators and obtaining base line data required to monitor performance. Multiple operating systems across the country has caused issues with benchmarking our performance against other authorities.
	Any planned legislation or local policy changes that are likely to impact on levels of homelessness for particular groups in the district.	AVDC Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum, Strategy & Partnerships Team	Ongoing	N/A	Continue to monitor the impact of any changes. In particular have responded to Government consultation on Tackling Homelessness and whether Homeless Prevention Boards should be established. New Domestic Abuse Guidance has been cascaded to the Allocations Team.
	Report on Performance Indicator targets and highlight any slippages and report key updates to stakeholders.	Housing Team	Monthly	TBA	New performance indicators are in the process of being established.
	Capture approaches across all homelessness partners and provide key updates to stakeholders.	Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum	Ongoing	TBA	Members of the Homeless Prevention Forum asked to provide this information.
<b>Review and monitor the Homelessness Reduction Act</b>	Engage with relevant internal teams and external partners to bring about the successful delivery of the new service.	Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum	To be reviewed in March 2019	TBA	Review postponed due to team workload pressures associated with Homelessness Reduction Act and the lack of comparable baseline data.

**Strategic Aim - 9.1 Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping**

**Outcome: Those at risk of homelessness are able to access interventions at the right time in the right way and secure stable accommodation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>implementation plan</b>	Support agencies who may be willing to work with us to help administer personal housing plans.	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	We are working in partnership with health agencies to gather information for us to put into the plans ourselves.
<b>Continue to work towards eliminating rough sleeping</b>	Work with and continue to financially support partners to continue existing winter emergency provision from January to March	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	During the winter 2018/19 we partnered with Riverside Housing, who manage our temporary accommodation at Bearbrook to provide Severe Winter Emergency provision locally and co-ordinated other accommodation in-house as part of the Rough Sleeper Initiative Project. This included funding Youth Concern to accommodate homeless young people.
	Work with partners to secure extended emergency B & B for the Rough Sleeper initiative (WEP)	Private and commercial B&B providers, Rough Sleeper Initiative, Housing Team	Complete	Mar-19	This has been provided.
	Work with partners to secure ongoing 'housing first type' model settled accommodation options for medium risk clients	Registered providers	Ongoing	N/A	2018/19. Plans for 2019/20 are underway.
	Work with providers to secure access to additional end of pathway accommodation (low support)	Registered providers, Housing Team	Complete	Nov-18	

**Strategic Aim - 9.1 Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping**

**Outcome: Those at risk of homelessness are able to access interventions at the right time in the right way and secure stable accommodation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Work with partners to procure and provide specialist support services to deliver the Rough Sleeper Project	Homeless Prevention Forum, specialist services, Rough Sleeper Initiative	Complete	Aug-18	Work commenced with local partners. About to embark on cross district collaboration.
	Work with partners to secure high risk accommodation for complex clients	Private Sector Housing providers, Homeless Prevention Forum, Registered Providers, Rough Sleeing Initiative	Ongoing	N/A	Currently collaborating with BCC
	Work cross-county to secure additional funding streams for County wide initiatives for rough sleeping	District Councils, BCC, Rough Sleeper Initiative	Ongoing	N/A	Strategy and Partnership Team lead on a cross sector piece of work to secure funding support for those with high needs.
	Work with MHCLG to address statutory gaps in provision with multiple statutory agencies	BCC, Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	The MHCLG Homeless Advise and Support Team visited on several occasions to support implementation.They recently met to discuss the needs of homelessness young people.

**Strategic Aim - 9.1 Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping**

**Outcome: Those at risk of homelessness are able to access interventions at the right time in the right way and secure stable accommodation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Develop a rough sleeper action plan/strategy	Strategy & Partnerships Team. Housing Team, Rough Sleeper Initiative	Complete	Autumn 2019	The action plan complete. Review conducted by Autumn 2019.
	Work with MHCLG to secure funding for access to private rented settled accommodation to prevent or relieve rough sleeping	Rough Sleeper Initiative, Strategy & Partnerships Team	Complete	Jan-19	Funding bid was unsuccessful. The reason given that it was unable to demonstrate ongoing sustainability.
	Relieve existing known low/medium support cases (as at September 18) of rough sleeping by December 18	Rough Sleeper Project Group	Complete	Dec-18	This action was met in 2018.
	Prevent rough sleeping (no first night out) low/medium cases	Rough Sleeper project group, Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	There remains an increase in clients entering the service and in June 2019 24 rough sleepers were reported as sleeping rough.
	Meet the Government Rough Sleeping Strategy of ending rough sleeping by 2027	Rough Sleeper Initiative, MHCLG, Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	Within the Rough Sleeper Initiative.

**Strategic Aim - 9.1 Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping**

**Outcome: Those at risk of homelessness are able to access interventions at the right time in the right way and secure stable accommodation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Reduce numbers of verified Rough Sleepers in Aylesbury Vale to below 10	Rough Sleeper Initiative, Homeless Prevention Forum, Housing Team	Mar-19		In February 2019 the number of rough sleepers fell below 10. On the recent count in May 2019 there were 17 identified rough sleepers. This is a significant increase, however an increase in rough sleeping is reflected in all other authorities.
	Continue to develop the effectiveness and publicity of the Building Resilience Service.	Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum, HPF, S&PT, Connection Support	Complete	Mar-19	This service was a pilot and has now concluded. An full review was conducted and an exit strategy was put together for remaining clients. Lessons learnt currently being implemented.
<b>Continue to reach all groups of people who at risk of homelessness at the earliest possible opportunity.</b>	Continue to identify causes of homelessness locally and work with partners to address these.	Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum, Strategy & Partnership Team	Ongoing	N/A	Following lessons learnt, District Councils utilised the underspend from the Building Resilience Trailblazers Project to fund a county-wide Prison/Probation and Housing Liaison Service to manage the Duty to Refer process from prisons.
	Identify and develop local protocols or referral arrangements with “duty to refer” agencies.	Housing Team, Strategy & Partnership Team	Complete	Mar-19	The Housing Team met with partners and provided referral contact details.

**Strategic Aim - 9.1 Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping**

**Outcome: Those at risk of homelessness are able to access interventions at the right time in the right way and secure stable accommodation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Investigate instances of hidden homelessness including sofa surfers and work with those caught in this cycle.	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	Continue to support sofa surfers who present to the service. Although unable to commit resources to investigate the dynamics of this particular cohort in any detail.
<b>Continue to seek and implement instances of best practice</b>	Identify new revenue streams and funding opportunities to improve and increase the services we and our partners can offer across the Vale.	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	Secured a Move On Fund to enable a move from supported housing. Working with BCC Housing Commissioning Team to review all current contracts which relate to tenancy support.
	Sustain the non-placement of families in B&B accommodation unless in emergency (and then for no longer than 6 weeks) and explore opportunities to extend and improve our temporary accommodation offer.	Housing Team, Strategy & Partnerships Team, External partners	Ongoing	N/A	Managing to support families. Only place in B&B as last resort and only for a period of no more than 6 weeks. Secured access to self contained accommodation for families from a private provider and have access to accommodation in Buckingham, where a need was identified.
<b>Consolidate and develop partnership working</b>	Continue to develop the Homelessness Prevention Forum and engage members in fulfilling the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act.	Housing Team, Strategy & Partnerships Team, External partners	Ongoing	N/A	Regular meetings take place and members are contacted to provide interim updates where these are identified.
	Launch the Partnership Charter and encourage members of the Forum to pledge their support and work towards the aims and objectives specified within it.	Housing Team, Strategy & Partnerships Team	Autumn 2019	N/A	Two aims of the charter have been highlighted for progression - duplication and publicity of services. Currently exploring ways to progress these.

**Strategic Aim - 9.1 Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping**

**Outcome: Those at risk of homelessness are able to access interventions at the right time in the right way and secure stable accommodation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Work with partners from within the Charter to develop shared communications and training plans.	Housing Team, Strategy & Partnership Team	Winter 2019	Ongoing	Several training days took place with partners where a need was identified. Forum members were communicated when Severe Winter Emergency Provision was activated. Work is being explored around how we can communicate key homeless messages to the public.
	Continue to identify agencies whose services are not currently mapped.	Strategy & Partnerships Team	Ongoing	N/A	Ongoing identification and through the Strategy and Partnerships Team Horizon Scanning process.

**Strategic Aim 9.2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**  
**Outcome: To work towards a sufficient supply of accommodation across a variety of tenures to meet need**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>Increase the supply of new affordable homes</b>	Develop the highest level of affordable homes possible in accordance with relevant national and local planning policies.	Housing Team, Registered Providers, Housing Developers	Ongoing	N/A	Ongoing
	Enable additional affordable rural housing where this need is identified.	AVDC Planning Team	Ongoing	N/A	Several developments in the pipeline in rural areas (although not Rural Exception Schemes specifically)
	Review the effectiveness and utilisation of government house building incentives such as the New Homes Bonus.	AVDC Planning Team, AVDC Economic & Development Delivery Team, Housing Developers and Registered Providers	Annually	N/A	This continues to be reviewed, A proportion of the new homes bonus has been ring-fenced for the delivery of new affordable housing.
	Provide quarterly reports on completed developments.	AVDC Economic & Development Delivery Team	Quarterly	N/A	The number of new affordable homes for the period January to June 2019 was 155 new units. We are also exploring shared equity loans in Haddenham.
	Encourage registered providers to work with us and use the Capital Funding Pot and other funding streams to further increase the provision of affordable housing.	Registered Providers, AVDC Economic and Development Delivery Team	Ongoing	N/A	As above.

**Strategic Aim 9.2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**  
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<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Explore innovative opportunities for shared equity, rented and homeownership opportunities, including self build and co-living.	Strategy & Partnerships Team, Registered Providers	Ongoing	N/A	Seeking to bring forward 5 shared equity units on a scheme which was challenged on viability and which failed to interest Registered Providers in Haddenham. Investigating affordability on Build to Rent schemes etc.
	Implement the Empty Homes Policy	AVDC Environmental Health Team	Ongoing	N/A	A team member was upskilled to focus on supporting the implementation of this policy.
<b>Provide sufficient choice and tenure of housing options to meet the requirements of an ageing population.</b>	Engage with strategic older people services to respond to the housing requirements of an ageing population that includes accommodation to meet health and wellbeing needs for home ownership and rental.	AVDC Planning Team, Bucks County Council, Developers, RPs and Landlords	Ongoing		The emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) makes provision for a variety of housing types and sizes to meet the needs of the local population. Policy H6 and supporting text identifies the need for housing for older people, with specific demand for housing for older people set out in the Plan. VALP is currently at examination, and the Inspector has issued Interim Findings (September 2018) which set out that policy H6 needs to be revised to demonstrate how the housing needs of older people are to be met. Modifications are currently being prepared to address this issue. The main modifications to the Plan will be consulted on in due course.

**Strategic Aim 9.2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**  
**Outcome: To work towards a sufficient supply of accommodation across a variety of tenures to meet need**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Support and facilitate older residents to make move on choices to more suitable accommodation.	Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum, Registered Providers	Ongoing	N/A	Housing Team supported VAHT to incentivise under occupiers wishing to downsize with relocation costs. Three evictions prevented where occupiers unable to pay Under Occupation Penalty.
	Offer a variety of schemes to enable older homeowners to afford to move on i.e. Shared Ownership, Shared Equity and Help to Buy.	Registered Providers	Ongoing	N/A	Work conducted on providing disabled adapted properties.
<b>Work with partners to enable provision of settled and appropriate housing for vulnerable adults, young people and those with additional needs.</b>	Provide a proportion of new affordable homes to be mobility levels 1-3 for those with a disability.	AVDC Economic & Development Delivery Team, Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum	Ongoing		The emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) makes provision for a variety of housing types and sizes to meet the needs of the local population. Policy H6 and supporting text identifies the need for households with specific needs. VALP is currently at examination, and the Inspector has issued Interim Findings (September 2018) which set out that policy H6 needs to be amended to revise the requirements for Category 2 and Category 3 dwellings. Modifications are currently being prepared to address this issue. The main modifications to the Plan will be consulted on in due course.

**Strategic Aim 9.2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**  
**Outcome: To work towards a sufficient supply of accommodation across a variety of tenures to meet need**

Recommendation	What needs to be done	Lead agency and partners	Due date	Delivery date	January to June 2019 update
	Adapt services to meet the needs and accessibility of vulnerable groups i.e. those with mental health or complex needs, resettlement of offenders.	Housing Team, Bucks County Council, Probation	Ongoing		The introduction of the following posts and services are addressing these needs: Accommodation Officer, Mental Health Nurse and Prison and Probation Housing Liaison Service.
	Continue to provide a responsive and integrated Disabled Facilities Grant service to enable residents to remain living independently at home.	Homeless Prevention Forum, AVDC Environmental Health Team	Ongoing	N/A	During 2018/19 period, 48 grants were approved by the Staying Put Team. The average grant amount was £9,688. The breakdown of grant amounts was 6 under £5k, 31 between £5-£15k and 10 of between £15-£30k. The majority of approvals were for shower/bathrooms. 47 adaptations were completed during the year (includes works carried forward from the previous financial year but does not include works carried out by VAHT)
	Work with partners to adopt a No Wrong Door integrated policy for young people aged 16 to 25.	Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum, BCC	Complete	Dec-18	Work was carried out with Youth Concern.
	Review protocols and placements of young people aged 16 -17 into settled affordable accommodation.	Housing Team, BCC	Complete	Mar-19	Protocols reviewed and the Housing Team continue to offer BCC new staff member induction on the placement of young people.

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<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>Continue to develop and improve the response to victims of domestic abuse in social and private housing.</b>	Ensure information on lead agencies is available and accessible at the point of need.	Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum, Registered Providers, AVDC Community Safety Team	Jun-19	Jun-19	Aylesbury Womens Aid provided training for AVDC Housing staff. The Housing team have a Domestic Abuse Champion. New DA guidance notes were escalated to all staff.
	Increase understanding and identification of domestic abuse and apply appropriate signposting.	Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum, Registered Providers, AVDC Community Safety Team	Jun-19	Jun-19	Included within the above training sessions is how to identify cases and where to signpost clients to.
<b>Review access and effectiveness of Bucks Home Choice and allocations policy</b>	Review and monitor lettings policies.	All local district councils	Apr-19	Apr-19	Lettings Policies have been reviewed as part of the wider Bucks Home Choice review. Work was identified around providing more clarify on a number of sub groups.

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<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Work with the other district councils across Buckinghamshire to monitor, review and set appropriate qualification criteria to address local priorities and needs whilst considering the impact of policies and procedures on applicants who may be at risk of homelessness.			Apr-19	Bucks Home Choice has been reviewed and consulted on and the final draft was approved by Council. Implementation to go live on 1st October 2019. Until this time applications will be assessed under the existing Bucks Home Choice Policy (1st May 2014).
<b>Engage with the Aylesbury Garden Town project</b>	Ensure that the project takes into consideration the various challenges around affordable housing met by Aylesbury residents.	AV Garden Town Team	Ongoing	N/A	Draft Masterplan being developed. Will include engagement opportunities and informal discussions with the team. Also as part of a formal engagement process later in the year when Aylesbury Garden Town consult with the public. Ensure programme considers affordable housing challenges by including references to longer term housing and homelessness in the masterplan, which could support future local plan policies as part of the new unitary authority. If funding projects linked to homelessness are identified in the strategy, AGT may be able to provide support going forward.

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<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>Work with the planning team, RPs and developers to ensure that our strategic aims are embedded within planning for the district</b>	Engage and consult with future plans and planning team.	AVDC Forward Plans Team, Registered Providers, developers	Ongoing	N/A	Ongoing engagement with Planning Policy Team
<b>Continue to develop the integrity and quality of the private rented sector</b>	Continue to strengthen housing advice to effectively tackle issues such as illegal evictions, harassment, disrepair etc.	Housing Team, AVDC Environmental Health Team	Ongoing	N/A	The Housing Team continue to support those illegally evicted. The Environmental Health Team is also working on Homes of Multiple Occupation licence enforcement.
	Review the current Private Rent Scheme to enable more tenancies within the sector.	Housing Team, Strategy & Partnerships Team	Complete		This was reviewed.
<b>Provide support for homeowners at risk of homelessness due to mortgage difficulties</b>	Work with lenders to ensure homeowners threatened with repossession are referred to AVDC at the earliest known opportunity.	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	Housing Team continue to support homeowners who present to them as being at risk of homelessness and will represent them in court. In most cases this is due to a change of circumstances or job loss.

**Strategic Aim 9.2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**  
**Outcome: To work towards a sufficient supply of accommodation across a variety of tenures to meet need**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Continue to integrate our service with the Department for Work and Pensions on mortgage referrals.	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	Housing Debt Advice service continues to receive mortgage referrals under the civil procedure rules. All clients are offered an appointment and help to negotiate with their lender as well as representation in court.
<b>Reduce instances of social tenancy fraud</b>	Continue to work with registered providers to identify and expose social tenancy fraud.	Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum	Ongoing	N/A	Where instances are identified, Housing Officers will investigate fraud. Officers work in partnership with the Department of Works and Pensions and loan shark agencies on detection and crime prevention work.
	Continue subscription to the National Anti-Fraud Network.	Housing Team, Homeless Prevention Forum	Ongoing	N/A	This is a rolling ongoing action, used mainly to provide credit checks.
<b>Support registered housing providers (RP's) and Private Landlords to provide tenancy sustainment services for</b>	Continue to support registered providers to provide information and assistance to tenants to enable tenancy sustainment and referring clients threatened with homelessness to AVDC.	Housing Team, Registered Providers	Ongoing	N/A	Information is provided through the Landlords Forum and where alerted by providers. The Housing Team recently arranged for Connection Support to provide a tenancy sustainment service to Paradigm Housing.

**Strategic Aim 9.2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**  
**Outcome: To work towards a sufficient supply of accommodation across a variety of tenures to meet need**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>tenants</b>	Continue to host the Landlords Forum (Private Landlords) and provide an opportunity for landlords to gain expertise and understanding of the key issues affecting their sector.	Environmental Health, Housing Team, Private Landlords	Ongoing	N/A	The latest forum took place on 16th July 2019. As well as a National Landlords' Association update, there was an update on AVDC Private Sector Housing Enforcement and a guest speaker from Envirovent spoke on Damp, Condensation and Mould.
<b>Review supported housing needs and move on protocols</b>	Work with partners to assess supply and demand.	Housing Team, BCC	Ongoing	N/A	This is ongoing work with partners.
	Update existing move on protocols and establish new ones where mutually beneficial.	Housing Team, BCC	Ongoing	N/A	Housing Officers recently reviewed the Bearbrook protocol and will have reviewed all their existing protocols to ensure they are fit for purpose by the end of August.
<b>Improve housing standards in the Private Rented Sector</b>	Monitor outcomes from government consultations on Electrical Safety Standards and the creation of a Housing Ombudsman for privately rented homes and new homes.	AVDC Environmental Health Team	Ongoing	N/A	AVDC Environmental Health Officers have not had any cause to be involved in either consultations and therefore this item is no longer applicable.

**Strategic Aim 9.2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**  
**Outcome: To work towards a sufficient supply of accommodation across a variety of tenures to meet need**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Explore incentives to raise the standard of the PRS.	AVDC Environmental Health Team	Ongoing	N/A	Team focuses on landlords meeting their legal compliance and uses enforcement where this falls short to improve the standards in the sector, namely the enforcement of rogue landlords who are failing to license and/or are not adhering to management regulations and allowing properties to fall below a required standard.

**Strategic Aim 9.2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**  
**Outcome: To work towards a sufficient supply of accommodation across a variety of tenures to meet need**

Recommendation	What needs to be done	Lead agency and partners	Due date	Delivery date	January to June 2019 update
	Continue to monitor and improve the standards of houses in multiple occupation.	AVDC Environmental Health Team	Ongoing	N/A	Successful prosecution of landlords in relation to two Chalgrove Walk Properties (9th July press release) highlighted the lengthy casework involved in bringing a case before court. In terms of monitoring and improving the standards of houses in multiple occupation, focus is on the following 3 key areas: 1) processing licence applications to ensure that HMOs meet legal requirements (which includes inspection of properties). To note: Scrutiny recently agreed that the Additional licensing scheme covering the whole of the Vale will expire in September 2019, so the team can focus on the mandatory scheme and enforcement of the highest risk and more serious offences. 2) investigation of complaints that come in from the public about HMOs. 3) closer working with partner agencies such as the police so we can receive intelligence and follow up concerns about either licensed or unlicensed properties.

**Strategic Aim 9.2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**  
**Outcome: To work towards a sufficient supply of accommodation across a variety of tenures to meet need**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>Support those in temporary accommodation to continue to enjoy a reasonable quality of life and access the range of services they need.</b>	Review how temporary accommodation is accessed and used to most effect.	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	An Accommodation Officer post was funded through the Rough Sleeper Initiative and is working well. Initial data collation has shown that there is already a reduction in evictions. This service partners alongside Barnardos who provide client support for those placed in temporary accommodation at Griffin Place.
	Explore options to improve quality and suitability of temporary accommodation.	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	A review took place and other sources of temporary accommodation have been found in the private rented sector. Housing Officers are working with Bromford Housing assets team to look at improvements to existing accommodation and have secured nomination rights for an extra 24 units.
	Ensure those in temporary accommodation are adequately supported and empowered to seek settled accommodation.	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	This has been addressed through the provision of an Accommodation Officer role and Banardos who provide clients with support and an exit route.

**Strategic Aim 9.2 - Continue to facilitate and maximise the supply of affordable housing**  
**Outcome: To work towards a sufficient supply of accommodation across a variety of tenures to meet need**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
	Enable households to access necessary support services whilst in temporary accommodation.	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	As above.
	Review how families can best be supported holistically with early interventions whilst in temporary accommodation.	Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	Now forms part of the Accommodation Officer role.

**Strategic Aim 9.3 - Respond to the ongoing challenges of welfare reform**

**Outcome: To ensure that AVDC residents receive the help and support they need to access housing related benefits.**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<p><b>Monitor the impact of Universal Credit roll out on claimants and landlords</b></p>	<p>Help claimants to access UC applications online &amp; mitigate the impact where possible.</p>	<p>Citizens Advice, AVDC Revenue and Benefits team</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>		<p>Before April 2019 funding was provided by Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) per person referred to AVDC for help in making a UC application or required personal budgeting support but walk-ins were unfunded. Training was provided to Officers to provide claimant guidance on making a UC claim. A dedicated secure system was installed in the Customer Service Centre (CSC) so claimants could create email accounts and verify ID. Clients can use a tablet with free Wi-Fi to access their UC accounts. From April 2019, Citizens Advice became responsible for helping customers with UC applications and budgeting, although we continue to assist and support customers where required; unfunded dedicated web pages were added to AVDC website to provide customers with information and signposting to DWP and are updated as UC evolves. Revenues and Benefits staff received extensive training on UC. How to guides have been written to ensure a first class service is delivered to our customers.</p>

**Strategic Aim 9.3 - Respond to the ongoing challenges of welfare reform**

**Outcome: To ensure that AVDC residents receive the help and support they need to access housing related benefits.**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>Prepare residents for universal credit</b>	Create a communications plan within AVDC to ensure that UC information is available to the public and services for help are well signposted.	AVDC Revenue and Benefits team	Aug-19	complete	Aylesbury Vale became a UC Full service area on 26 September 2018 and this was promoted using leaflets, web pages, posters (displayed in public places) and pull up banners for use at events and forums. The extensive in-house training received by our Officers enabled clear and concise advice to be relayed to customers ensuring our residents were prepared for the changes UC would bring. There is a constant pressure on the Revenues and Benefits team to keep up with UC changes as they evolve which requires review of the interpretation of the UC regulations and where necessary amending procedures and providing training/workshops to staff. Staff keep updated and implement changes quickly to ensure our customers are not disadvantaged.
	Ensure that the AVDC website is correct and current and also signposts to the relevant services where necessary.	AVDC Revenue and Benefits team	Complete		
	Create debt advice leaflets for RPs to use for their clients.	AVDC Revenue and Benefits team	Complete		

**Strategic Aim 9.3 - Respond to the ongoing challenges of welfare reform**

**Outcome: To ensure that AVDC residents receive the help and support they need to access housing related benefits.**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>Monitor the impact of welfare reforms on tenants, housing associations and landlords</b>	Support those who are affected by the shared accommodation rate for under 35s for private housing.	AVDC Revenue and Benefits team, Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	AVDC Revenues and Benefits support customers affected by Social Sector Size Criteria (bedroom tax) and who are subject to any other forms of rent and benefits restrictions. Improvements have been made to the management of the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) fund. Processes and procedures have been streamlined to speed up the decision-making process and provide better control of the fund. Improved closer working with Housing ensures timely response and claimants receive the maximum amount of benefit they are entitled to. Regular forums have been introduced to share knowledge and strengthen this joint-working to continually improve how we deal with homelessness and address matters in a more comprehensive and timely manner.
	Advise and assist those who are affected by the benefit cap.	AVDC Revenue and Benefits team	Ongoing	N/A	Same as above.

**Strategic Aim 9.3 - Respond to the ongoing challenges of welfare reform**

**Outcome: To ensure that AVDC residents receive the help and support they need to access housing related benefits.**

Recommendation	What needs to be done	Lead agency and partners	Due date	Delivery date	January to June 2019 update
	Monitor the effectiveness of the Landlord Portal to access housing benefit at source and the Trusted Partner status.	AVDC Revenue and Benefits team	Daily	N/A	Landlords Portal is now out dated as a self service tool. An improved version is available and staff attended a demonstration. The new system offers greater control for the landlord and provides more information which will result in reduced contact and staff resource to maintain it. However, this project has stalled at the moment owing to the work currently going on for transition to Unitary. Members of the Revenues and Benefits team attend landlord forums where common issues can be identified and jointly addressed. We continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure a prompt, informative and accurate service is provided.

**Strategic Aim 9.4 - Contribute to the improvement of health and wellbeing services for people at risk of homelessness**

**Outcome: To reduce the number of approaches of people with multiple needs and increased effectiveness of No Second Night Out.**

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>Develop partnerships with organisations specialising in primary care, substance dependency, mental health, employment and training</b>	Invite organisations from these services to join the Partnership Charter and attend the Homelessness Prevention Forum.	Strategy & Partnerships Team, Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	Housing Team would like to see more decision makers from partner organisations attend the forum. Members are encouraged to contribute towards meeting agendas and sign up to the Partnership Charter.
<b>Develop new health services for those who are homeless or have no fixed address</b>	Investigate opportunities to provide GP services and fast track prescription services for those who are homeless or have no fixed address.	Housing Team	Complete		An agreement with the CCG has enabled the provision of an enhanced service to allow homeless people to be seen by a GP for a longer period of time.
	Look to develop a fast track mental health service with critical partners for those who are homeless or have no fixed address.		Ongoing	N/A	A Mental Health Nurse has been recruited as part of the Rough Sleeper Initiative project to identify those with mental health needs and liaise with partner services to provide the appropriate intervention.
<b>Work with partners to identify and support households affected by fuel poverty.</b>	Identify potential funding initiatives to support those most at risk particularly within private rented and homeowners in rural communities.	AVDC Environmental Health Team	Ongoing	N/A	Environmental Health Officers continue to signpost people to applicable schemes where they can borrow money to do work on their property. As schemes equally support those in rural as well as urban locations this action is no longer applicable.

**Strategic Aim 9.4 - Contribute to the improvement of health and wellbeing services for people at risk of homelessness**

**Outcome: To reduce the number of approaches of people with multiple needs and increased effectiveness of No Second Night Out.**

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>	<b>Lead agency and partners</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>January to June 2019 update</b>
<b>Engage with hospital discharge teams</b>	Ensure discharge teams and housing support services harmonise to avoid unnecessary delays.	NHS, Housing Team	Ongoing	N/A	The Principal Housing Officer provided training to Hospital Discharge Co-ordinators on identifying those at risk of homelessness and why they need to alert the Housing team at the earlier opportunity.
<b>Equip GPs to signpost to appropriate early intervention services</b>	Ensure GPs have the necessary resources to signpost patients potentially at risk of homelessness at the earliest opportunity.	CCG, Housing Team	May-19	complete	The Housing Team provided information to the CCG as part of the Rough Sleeper Initiative Project as this organisation does not have a public body duty to refer.

## FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2019/20

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 To allow the scrutiny committee to review the 2019-20 food service plan and suggest any comments for inclusion in future plans.

### 2 Recommendations

That members:

- 2.1 Note the contents and approve the 2019-20 Food Service Plan
- 2.2 Make any relevant comments or provide comments that should be a considered by the Buckinghamshire Council for inclusion in future Food Service Plans.

### 3 Supporting information

- 3.1 Under European food law the Food Standards Agency (FSA) are deemed to be the competent authority. To ensure these powers are exercised consistently across the country by local authorities the FSA has developed a framework agreement part of which includes the production by each local authority of a food service plan.
- 3.2 Service plans are seen as an important part of the process to ensure that national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally.
- 3.3 The details to be contained in the plan are specified by the FSA. Plans must contain the following information.
- Service Aims and Objectives
  - Background
  - Service Delivery
  - Resources
  - Quality Assessment
  - Review
- 3.4 The Aylesbury Vale Food Service Plan for 2019-20 is attached to this report as Appendix 1.
- 3.5 The key features of the plan are:
- There are 1690 registered food businesses in Aylesbury Vale. This is a small decrease from 2018/2019 (when the total number was 1798, this is partially due to the work undertaken in checking and removing closed businesses from our database)
  - Premises are given a risk rating, A to E. Resources are targeted to ensure higher risk premises (A, B, Non-compliant C and Unrated) are inspected in accordance with the FSA Code of Practice.
  - The number of premises which are deemed to be “broadly compliant” with the law is 97.81%.
  - In 2018/19 in total we achieved 92.9% of our programmed interventions. This represents an improvement from the rate achieved in 2017/18 (87%). 100% of premises inspections rated A- non compliant C were completed.
  - The number of unrated inspections from the previous year is 37.

The plan identifies areas of improvement or exploration to improve efficiency and to ensure we are offering the best service to our customers.

These include:

- Monitor the Brexit process and implement advice/guidance from central government which has an impact on food businesses. It is believed that there will be changes around the Export Health Certificates and we will change processes as necessary. Further detail is contained in section 3.5 of the plan.
- Prepare for the formation of the Buckinghamshire Council and work with other existing Buckinghamshire councils to ensure that the food service can be delivered from 1 April 2020.
- Continue to review the premises database with a focus on category E rated premises to ensure that where appropriate, these premises are classified as outside the programme. This will improve the database accuracy and ensure resources are targeted to those requiring intervention and based on risk to public health.
- Enforcement Officers will be encouraged to undertake more targeted partial inspections for some category C premises and for the majority of D rated premises such as pubs and restaurants with broadly compliant hygiene scores. We believe that there are many advantages of an inspection compared with sending a questionnaire; businesses also tell us they prefer an inspection as an opportunity to speak to a food safety officer. A partial inspection will also help reduce the inspection time meaning we can focus more time and resource on those businesses that are non compliant.
- Enforcement Officers are to target D and E Rated premises who did not return questionnaires last year. If necessary inspections will be carried out. This work will improve the accuracy of our database.
- Continue to promote our 'New Food Business Advice Service'
- Continue to keep abreast of current issues, (particularly Regulating our Future and Brexit) and cascade information to businesses as required.
- Ensure that we participate in the PHE sampling programmes for 2019/20 and that sampling is undertaken where appropriate to enhance our food safety interventions (i.e. to assist with educating food business operators and to assist in the evaluation of food hygiene procedures)

#### **4 Resource implications**

- 4.1 The plan sets out the staff and financial resources required to deliver the programme of food inspections required to meet FSA targets.

Contact Officer

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Background Documents

None

**Appendix 1**  
**Official Food Controls Service Plan**  
**Aylesbury Vale District Council 2019/20**

**1. Service Aims & Objectives**

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The food controls service plan sets out Aylesbury Vale District Council's intentions for taking forward corporate and service level objectives in relation to food hygiene and safety in the Vale.

**2. Background**

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Aylesbury Vale covers 350 square miles and makes up more than half of the County of Buckinghamshire in the centre of Southern England. It is located approximately 40 miles north-west of London and 65 miles south-east of Birmingham. Good transport links are provided via three major road routes – the M1, M25 and M40. Aylesbury Vale has a population of approximately 184,500 of which approximately 78,000 reside in Aylesbury itself. Of the local population approximately 14% come from ethnic minority groups. Aylesbury Vale's population is based in the three major settlements of Aylesbury, Buckingham and Wendover and many mid to small rural parishes of which over half have less than 500 residents. As such the Vale has a mixed economic profile with large areas of predominantly agricultural activity as well as small hubs of commercial and industrial activity. Parts of Aylesbury Vale have been designated for their landscape quality, either as forming part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Areas of Attractive Landscape or Local Landscape Areas. Aylesbury is the administrative centre for both the District Council and the County Council.

## 2.2 Organisational Structure

Aylesbury Vale District Council has a governance structure consisting of the Leader of the Council, a Deputy Leader and seven Cabinet Members each with a specific portfolio area. The food service is within the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Waste and Licensing.

In 2016/17 and the early part of 2017/18 Aylesbury Vale District Council was significantly restructured in line with the 'Commercial AVDC' programme refocusing services around a more commercial, sustainable and flexible organisational model. Environmental Health functions which include food safety, are being delivered within Regulatory Services as part of the Customer Fulfilment directorate.

Regulatory Services is split into four teams: Environment, Enforcement (South), Enforcement (North) and Housing. Environmental Health functions including food safety, health and safety, statutory nuisance, pollution Control, public health (infectious diseases control) and private sector housing are delivered within both Enforcement teams (North and South) based on geographical area. The Principal Enforcement Officer is the lead officer for food controls and reports directly to an Enforcement Team Manager. There are four Enforcement Officers with the qualifications to carry out official food controls and four Enforcement Officers with a primary focus on environmental health functions (one of these posts is career graded).

Our career graded Enforcement Officer has successfully completed her MSc in Environmental Health and is now in the process of completing her Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) learning portfolio to become a qualified Environmental Health Practitioner. The service also employs a 2nd Principal Enforcement Officer who is the lead technical expert for Private Sector Housing matters and who also sits within the Enforcement team but does not undertake any food enforcement activity. The Environment Team contains a Pollution Control Officer who acts as the technical expert for contaminated land, air quality and private drinking water supplies.

The work alongside food service delivery includes all proactive and reactive work for health and safety, public health, statutory nuisance, licensing and planning consultation, pollution control and housing standards. The food controls work is undertaken by Enforcement Officers is dependent on their level of qualification, experience and competency as required by the Food Law Code of Practice. The food service is driven by a combination of reactive and proactive demand.

During 2018/19 a number of qualified contractors were employed temporarily to assist with the delivery of food controls by undertaking low risk inspections. All contractors must evidence the qualifications, experience and competency to carry out this work as required by the Food Law Code of Practice. The Principal Enforcement Officer monitors and audits contractors' work to ensure a high standard of consistency and quality of service is maintained for our residents and businesses.

### 2.3 External contacts and provision

AVDC has liaison arrangements with public bodies and local authorities in Buckinghamshire. AVDC is a member of the Buckinghamshire Food Liaison Group. The Group has agreed terms of reference with regard to the shared common interests of the provision of official food controls in Buckinghamshire. The group consists of Environmental Health representatives from South Bucks and Chiltern District Councils, Wycombe District Council and Milton Keynes Council. Also in attendance are Trading Standards representatives from Buckinghamshire and Surrey County Council and Milton Keynes Council and representatives from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Public Health England. The group covers current enforcement issues, sampling results and programmes, legislation updates and implementation and initiatives to improve food service delivery.

AVDC is also a member of the Thames Valley Environmental Health Liaison Group. The group is chaired by Public Health England and consists of Environmental Health representatives from South Bucks and Chiltern District Councils, Wycombe District Council and a representative from NHS Buckinghamshire. The group covers contemporary infectious disease issues, legislation updates and implementation, initiatives to improve outbreak control and service delivery.

The Environmental Health team also liaises with the South East (Thames Valley) unit of Public Health England (PHE) and the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control. Specialist services such as microbiological and chemical analysis of food and water samples are outsourced to UKAS accredited laboratories as required.

#### 2.4 Scope of the Food Service

The food service is delivered by the Enforcement Teams (North and South). The Officers deliver food controls alongside all other commercial and residential aspects of environmental health work.

The food service is driven by a combination of reactive and proactive demand.

- Reactive demand- This is based on intelligence from members of the public, internal departments and external organisations. This includes investigation of food and food premises complaints, investigation of notifications of infectious disease, responding to food incidents and alerts, requests for re-rating by food businesses under the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, participation in PHE led national sampling programmes, acting on food safety issues and trends as raised by the Food Standards Agency.
- Proactive demand - This is based on inspections required by law and education for food businesses. This includes programmed food inspections and interventions as required by the Food Law Code of Practice, maintenance of an annual sampling programme as agreed by Bucks Food Liaison Group. The provision of advice and support to new and existing food businesses in the Vale, the promotion of food safety to residents and visitors to the Vale and via the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

The Environmental Health service is delivered from the Council offices at The Gateway in Aylesbury during office hours. There is no out of hours service provided by Environmental Health. However, it is recognised that Officers may sometimes

need to work outside of these hours where food premises open solely in the evening or when an incident occurs.

## 2.5 Demands on the Food Service

The total number of food premises within the Vale is 1690. This is a small decrease from 2018/2019 (when the total number was 1798, this is partially due to the work undertaken in checking and removing closed businesses from our database). The table overleaf shows the food premises profile in Aylesbury Vale by business type and risk category:

Food premises profile by business type and risk category

Business Type	Premises Risk Category					Unrated	Outside Programme	Total
	A	B	C	D	E			
Primary Producers	0	0	1	5	20	2	3	31
Manufacturers/Packers	0	2	7	8	15	5	0	37
Importers/Exporters	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	6
Distributors/Transporters	0	0	1	1	22	1	6	31
Retailers	0	3	13	59	155	8	68	306
Restaurants/Caterers	3	28	240	416	363	34	195	1279
<b>Total no. of food premises</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>1690</b>

The classification of premises risk is in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice. Risk rating is based on the nature of the operation and standards of hygiene. Category A businesses are highest risk and category E are lowest risk. Unrated premises are those that have not currently been classified. Premises outside the programme are premises that are registered with us, but do not receive routine programmed interventions.

Approved establishments are food premises that prepare and handle foods of animal origin for sale or supply to other businesses. These premises must meet additional legislative food safety requirements and will generally require greater officer resource than other food premises. Within the premises profile there are 15 approved establishments and 2 further premises currently in the process of being approved. This is an increase of 1 over the previous year 2018/19.

There are several annual events that take place in Aylesbury Vale that require additional resource for inspection of mobile food and market traders. These include the British Grand Prix and Moto GP at Silverstone, Bucks County Show, ad hoc markets, licensed large scale (i.e. music events) and community events.

## 2.6 Regulation Policy

The Council has adopted the Government's 'Enforcement Concordat' on the principles of good enforcement. The Enforcement Teams operate in line with our Enforcement Policy which aims to ensure a clear and consistent approach to enforcement, including in the delivery of the food service. The Policy was last reviewed in May 2014, and has regard to the requirements of the Regulators' Code.

The Enforcement Policy adopts a tiered approach to enforcement and the action that will be taken by the Council to secure compliance with legislative requirements. The Policy adopts the principles of proportionality in applying the law and securing compliance, consistency of approach, targeting of enforcement action and transparency about how we will operate and what the duty holder may expect. The enforcement policy is operated with regard to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

## 3. Service Delivery

### 3.1 Interventions at Food Establishments

Interventions undertaken at food establishments result from a mixture of proactive programmed interventions (inspections or other interventions scheduled to be undertaken during 2018/19 generated from the Food Law Code of Practice risk rating process) including food sampling and reactive interventions. Reactive interventions may result from a complaint from an employee or member of the public, from unsatisfactory food sampling results or from intelligence received from another food authority or the Food Standards Agency e.g. in relation to a Food Alert.

Number of interventions due by risk category 2019/20 as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019

	<b>Total</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b> Non-comp	<b>C</b> Comp	<b>D</b> Non-comp	<b>D</b> Comp	<b>E</b>
<b>Programmed interventions</b> (including outstanding interventions 2018/19)	<b>717</b>	3	36	5	157	0	253	263
<b>New unrated interventions</b> (excluding low-risk categories)	<b>37</b>							
<b>Total</b>	<b>754</b>							

In order to target resource where the risk to health is the greatest, premises are inspected in accordance with a risk prioritisation scheme specified within the Food Hygiene Intervention Policy and Alternative Enforcement Strategy (AES) (The aim is to allow the Council to target a limited resource where the risk to public health is likely to be the greatest. In 2019/20 programmed interventions are to be carried out in accordance with date due and in the following priority order;

- A rated
- B rated
- C rated- non-compliant
- New unrated businesses awaiting inspection
- C rated- compliant
- D rated- non-compliant
- D rated- compliant
- E rated

The definition for non-compliant and compliant business is in line with the Food Law Code of Practice. It is based on the risk score given by the Officer at the time of

inspection. It includes three risk rating areas; food hygiene and safety, structure and cleaning and confidence in management. Compliant D rated and E rated premises are lower risk premises and will be subject to an Alternative Enforcement Strategy (AES) which will involve a mixture of inspection/audit and other interventions including the use of self-assessment questionnaires.

New unrated premises currently awaiting inspection as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019:

<b>Total no. of new unrated food premises awaiting inspection</b>	<b>37</b>
Child-minders awaiting intervention	8
Low-risk premises awaiting intervention (church halls etc.)	0
Low-risk domestic premises cake-makers	0
<b>Total no. of remaining unrated premises awaiting intervention</b> (excluding low risk categories above)	<b>29</b>

There has been an improvement in the total number of new unrated premises awaiting intervention (i.e. premises that have registered with the Council but not yet received an intervention) from 56 at the start of 2018/19 to 37 at the start of 2019/20. There inevitably will always be a small proportion of businesses who have registered with us, but we are unable to inspect them because they have not commenced trading. It is better to visit these premises once trading has commenced so the officer can see the practices which are actually being carried out on site.

New premises will continue to be prioritised this year because without any knowledge of the processes and activities going on within these businesses we cannot make risk judgements about them. Although there is a requirement for businesses to register with us 28 days before they commence trading, we find that businesses will either register too far in advance or not register prior to commencement of trading. Officers will often pick up information about new businesses via other intelligence sources.

The service uses an online food business registration form which was introduced in 2016/17. The online form reduces the administration time and allows quicker categorisation of lower risk businesses. The form requires the business to provide information about the food they prepare and supply before they can submit it to us. This information allows officers to determine if the premises is low risk or outside the programme. This includes small-scale domestic cake-makers and community halls available for hire. Premises outside the programme will not receive an inspection from the authority unless information or intelligence is received that justifies the need to do so. Should a complaint be received regarding one of these premises then this is likely to trigger an intervention.

The FSA are currently in the process of piloting a central registration system which will mean that businesses register at a central location rather than with each individual location where the premises will be located. Should this be rolled out nationally during 2019/20 we will also implement as directed.

In addition to the 754 programmed interventions and new unrated interventions (excluding low risk) detailed above the authority receives between 15 and 20 new food business registrations a month throughout the year. These numbers will also be factored into the inspection allocation for these periods. In 2019/20 the authority will continue to employ the services of a qualified contractor to assist with the low risk programmed inspections and to reduce the time taken to inspect new unrated premises. There has been budget allocated for this period to resource this.

### 3.2 Outstanding Inspections from 2018/19

Number of overdue interventions by risk category 2018/19 as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019:

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
A	0
B	0
C	0
D	17
E	28

<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>
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There are 45 overdue interventions from 2018/19. All of the outstanding interventions are from the lowest risk categories. The majority of these businesses will have been sent a questionnaire but failed to return it despite officers attempting to make contact with the business. It is likely that a number of these businesses may have ceased trading and not informed us. We will continue to target these premises during 2019/20 in order to establish their status and remove them from the database or reclassify them where appropriate.

### 3.3 Alternative Enforcement Strategy (for low-risk food businesses)

Premises currently due an AES intervention as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019<sup>1</sup>:

	Total	D	E
Premises due for AES intervention 2019/20	240	11	229

The policy relating to the inspection of food premises is detailed in the Food Hygiene Inspection Procedure. This document sets out what food businesses can expect from Officer interventions and expands in a practical way the Council's Divisional Enforcement Policy. In recognition that most businesses want to comply with the law, officers help food businesses and others meet their legal obligations without unnecessary expense, whilst taking firm action against those who fail to comply with the law, including prosecution where appropriate.

This Service Plan is focused towards directing our resources towards the highest risk and most non-compliant businesses. European food law states that all food businesses should receive an intervention, however, AVDC along with all other Bucks Food Liaison Group members formally agreed in June 2015 that some of the

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<sup>1</sup> These numbers are an estimate only because each premise is reviewed to determine whether AES is appropriate (for example if there's an FSA alert about a particular food issue or complaint which means an inspection is necessary)

premises below will be classed as having a non-inspectable risk. In addition, some food business registrations we receive are not technically required to be registered as a food business as set out in recital 9 of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 because what they do does not have the necessary 'continuity' or 'degree of organisation' required. For example a daily small-scale provision on weekday afternoons by community / charity volunteers such as provision of tea and biscuits in church halls. Another example would be a small food bank operating for just an hour or two per day on an infrequent basis by volunteers collecting tinned and packaged foodstuffs not requiring temperature control donated by for distribution to local needy people.

This approach will continue in 2019/20. This does not exempt these businesses from meeting food law requirements, but means that they will either not need to be registered or if they do require registration as a food business they are sufficiently low risk enough to not require a programmed intervention. Further example scenarios include:

- Retailers where the sale of low-risk food is ancillary and/or seasonal, e.g. clothes and card shops
- Service sector businesses only serving drinks and biscuits, e.g. hairdressers and car sales showrooms
- Religious groups only serving drinks and biscuits after events
- One-off events such as charity fundraisers and fetes
- Food brokers that do not actually handle food, i.e. offices
- Grain haulage businesses as Trading Standards will cover them if serving feed businesses (feed is animal food)
- Community halls offered for hire by others (individual businesses operating regularly from these will be expected to register and be subject to official controls)
- Child-minders that only provide milk, other drinks and low-risk snacks or serve food provided by the parents/guardians

AVDC seeks to ensure that resources are targeted and applied where they are most required and can be most effective. There are a number of food businesses that

consistently perform compliantly and/or have a number of external audits each year. Our policy when inspecting lower risk category D and E premises that require an inspection is that these types of premises now receive a 'targeted' partial inspection which focuses on a specific food hygiene element. This results in the inspection time for some lower risk businesses being cut by around 50%. Where appropriate, E rated premises and Compliant D rated premises that don't require an inspection can be sent a self assessment questionnaire.

### 3.4 Revisits

The Food Hygiene Inspection Procedure details the action to be taken when non-compliance following inspection is found and identifies when to carry out a revisit. In 2018/19 we undertook 35 revisits which took approximately 53 hours including administrative time. This does not include travel time.

### 3.5 Health Certificates

The division provides health certificates to several manufacturers within the Vale to assist with the export of products of fish or plant origin to countries outside of the European Union. Health certificates are provided for companies that have received an inspection or audit of the premises and this service is charged for. Last year the division issued 505 Health Certificates which generated £16,167. In 2019/20 we will continue to review the process of issuing health certificates to ensure we are offering customers the best service. In addition, it is understood that depending on how the UK leaves the EU (Brexit) then there maybe additional demands on this service. We will monitor advice from central government and implement as required. The current advice indicates the authority will retain flexibility to determine whether each consignment would need to be physically checked, based on existing records or the outcomes of previous official controls. In addition the government has introduced an additional qualification to improve the supply of Certification Support Officers (CSO) who can be engaged by Official Veterinarians (OV) to support the process. We do not therefore anticipate that any additional demand generated for Health Certificates would be unmanageable.

### 3.6 National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

The authority is part of the Food Standards Agency's national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS). The scheme is intended to give consumers information to assist them in making choices about where they buy their food from. AVDC promotes the scheme through various channels including social media, and articles in Council publications.

We have seen a continued interest in the ratings we award to businesses from the local media and have been contacted by members of the public for advice about premises following rating. Under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme businesses that have taken steps to address the issues of non-compliance raised at the time of their initial inspection can request a revisit to the premises for the purpose of re-rating. In the 2018/19 period the number of requests for revisit received by the authority was 28. This is a large increase over the previous year when we had 13 requests. Under the FHRS Local Authorities are able to make a charge to businesses requesting these re-rating visits to allow their costs to be recovered. In 2019/20 we will look into making the necessary arrangements to enable charges to be made following these requests. Obviously it makes sense that, in the lead up to the new Unitary authority, that any approach is consistent with the other District councils and may not be implemented until after vesting day when services will begin to harmonise.

### 3.7 Food Complaints

In the 2018/19 period the authority received 143 food related complaints. The resource involved in investigating these complaints by the EHOs was approximately 80 hours. This does not take into account time spent on telephone contact and data entry by the Customer Services Team. The complaints can be broken into two distinct areas; complaints regarding food itself (90 complaints), complaints about premises (53 complaints). It is anticipated that the number of food complaints and request for service received in the period 2019/20 is likely to be similar.

### 3.8 Primary Authority Scheme

The Council does not act as a Primary Authority partner for any food businesses within the Vale. The Primary Authority Scheme is adhered to by Officers when undertaking interventions in multi-outlet businesses. Officers will contact the Primary Authority where an agreement exists, on policy or enforcement issues relating to food hygiene for national food businesses.

### 3.9 Regulating Our Future

The FSA and Department of Business, Innovation and Skills have been reviewing the option of earned autonomy for businesses. This has led to the development of the FSA's Regulating our Future (ROF) agenda. ROF encompasses a significant rethink of how food controls are delivered across the UK and it has a clear principal at its heart which is a recognition that food businesses with an excellent compliance history will be able to use audit data to evidence compliance with food law. We will continue to ensure we are aware of these national developments and work with colleagues in the rest of Buckinghamshire to ensure we are able to adapt to meet the future changes in a consistent way.

### 3.10 Salesforce

The department moved from Uniform database system to a new system known as Salesforce in November 2017. Initial issues with the software (such as generating the 2017/18 annual food safety data return (known as Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS)) to the Food Standards Agency (FSA)) have now been resolved and the 2018/19 annual food safety data return was generated and submitted on time. Now that Officers are more experienced with the programme we are beginning to realise the advantages of moving to the new software such as the ease of generating and drilling into reports (e.g. inspections outstanding, Requests for service by Officer and others).

### 3.11 Advice to businesses

Officers routinely provide advice and guidance to businesses during programmed interventions. However there are also a number of contacts received each year from businesses requesting advice regarding their existing business or from those looking to set up a new food business in the Vale. In January 2019 we launched our new 'New Food Business Advice Service'. This is a paid for service for prospective new food businesses to consult with Food Safety Officer on their food business plans. For a fixed fee of £200 the customer receives 2 hours contact from a food officer. As an example this could involve a visit from an officer to view a premises and discuss kitchen layout, or it could be a review of a food safety management system and telephone feedback/consultation. The service is designed to be flexible to accommodate the many different needs a new food business may have.

To date we have received and processed 2 New Food Business Advice requests. We will continue to promote this service and intend to review its success after 1 year.

In addition, the AVDC website provides links to further guidance and information which food businesses are directed and we are continuing to improve our online offer to new food businesses. All new registrations automatically receive an information pack which gives practical advice on what steps to take in order to get a maximum 5 star food hygiene rating. We have also made sure that this advice pack includes information about the Council's commercial waste bin collection service and how businesses can apply for this service.

### 3.12 Food Sampling Programme

Food sampling is undertaken in line with the Food Sampling Policy and Procedure. The objectives of the food sampling programme are to protect the consumer from contaminated foods that may pose a risk to health. The Council participates in both proactive and reactive sampling activity. Proactive sampling involves participation in national sampling programmes coordinated by Public Health England, Bucks Food Liaison Group and the Food Standards Agency. The information obtained through the national sampling programmes helps to identify food hazards and provides a knowledge base for food authorities. Reactive sampling is also undertaken in food

businesses in the Vale where it is necessary to validate food processes, activities and procedures and to investigate contamination and food poisoning incidents.

The 2019/20 proactive sampling plan is based on the Public Health England (PHE) UK Co-Ordinated Microbiological Sampling Programme 2019/20. It is anticipated that the Council will participate in the studies where we have premises which are included in the scope of the surveys. In addition a number of reactive samples will be taken during the course of the year to both validate food processes and procedures and investigate where there may be concerns regarding contamination.

In 2018/19 a total of 12 proactive and reactive samples were taken from food businesses in the Vale. The four Enforcement Officers (Environmental Health) working with the Environmental Health division are authorised to take informal food samples and will be involved in proactive sampling for the national sampling programme. In 2019/20 we anticipate undertaking more sampling both as part of the PHE National Studies and in addition to assist with our food safety interventions. In the event that a formal food sample needs to be taken where legal action may result, a food competent Enforcement Officer would undertake this sampling.

Samples requiring microbiological analysis are submitted for analysis to the Food and Water Laboratory at Public Health England in Colindale, London. Food sampling analysis credits are provided by the PHE and used and shared by the food authorities in Buckinghamshire. AVDC liaises with the other food authorities in Buckinghamshire via the Buckinghamshire Food Group to coordinate sampling across the County. There may be occasions when samples need to be sent to the Public Analyst for chemical contamination or composition analysis. Our appointed Public Analyst is Worcester Scientific Services.

### 3.13 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

Food poisoning notifications and outbreak controls are carried out in accordance with the Control of Infectious Disease Procedure (QPMS-11). In 2018/19 the number of notifications of infectious disease received by the Council was 197. Not all of these were necessarily food related, and it is extremely rare to be able to associate them

with a premises/food source. PHE directly investigate a number of infectious diseases with the patient and only notify the Council where they find links with a premises or are given information which is of concern. The Council directly investigates Campylobacter and Salmonella in vulnerable people or where it is known the patient is a food handler. Many of our investigations are undertaken via a postal questionnaire. It is considered likely that a similar number of notifications will be received by the authority this year. The majority of notifications are administered by the Customer Relationship team and Enforcement Officers who categorise the disease case by risk group and send out and administer questionnaires as necessary. In some cases it is necessary to carry out visits to infected persons to provide advice or assistance with the collection of faecal sampling at the request of PHE. The information collected is provided to PHE as requested to inform and assist with trend analysis.

In the event of an outbreak of infectious disease the investigation process follows that detailed within the PHE Thames Valley Health Protection Team Outbreak Plan and would be led by an Enforcement Officer. In the event of an outbreak resources have to be pulled from other work streams to enable investigation of the outbreak as necessary. This resource cannot be allocated on a day-to-day basis because of the unpredictability of occurrence and can place high demands on other areas of service provision at the time of the outbreak.

### 3.14 Food Safety Incidents

Food Safety incidents are dealt with in line with the Food Incident Policy and Procedure and in line with the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice. In 2018/19 a small number of food safety incidents required action from the authority. The authority is regularly informed of incidents and product recalls which have taken place such as due to undeclared allergens. These are read and action taken if directed by the Food Standards Agency.

### 3.15 Liaison with Other Organisations

The Authority has liaison arrangements with various outside bodies and neighbouring local authorities including the Buckinghamshire Food Liaison Group and Thames Valley Environmental Health Liaison Group. In 2018/19 the resource involved in attending and contributing to Liaison Groups was approximately 50 Principal Enforcement Officer hours. It is anticipated that the resource implications for the period 2019/20 will be similar.

### 3.16 Food Safety Promotional Work and other Non-official Controls Interventions

There is limited resource available for the provision of food safety promotional work in the 2019/20 period. The Council utilises the media toolkits produced by the Food Standards Agency promoting FHRS around Christmas and Valentines' Day, weekend Bank Holidays and allergen awareness using the Council's social media accounts. The local newspaper has run several articles on FHRS and this has raised awareness of the scheme. It is anticipated in 2019/20 that we will continue to use the FSA media tool kits which enable us to use both traditional press releases and social media. Articles will also be included in the Council newspaper 'Vale Times' which is distributed to every house in the Vale. It is anticipated that around 10 hours will be spent on food safety promotional work. Articles are also placed on the AVDC intranet to raise awareness with staff regarding FHRS and other activities related to food that the team undertakes.

The Food Information Regulations came into force in 2014. These are primarily enforced by Trading Standards, however, environmental health has been given some enforcement powers concerning the allergen requirements in catering establishments. Officers check compliance and provide advice and guidance during routine inspections.

## 4. Resources

### 4.1 Financial Allocation

The overall level of expenditure allocated for the provision of the food service in the 2019/20 period is as indicated below:

Staff Costs (and internal recharges – Marketing, Finance etc.)	£138,000
All recharges	£71,000
Equipment/printing	£2000
Specialist advice (including payments for contractor inspections)	£14,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£225,000</b>

The estimated level of food service demand during the 2019/20 period:

Food service demand 2019/20	Resource required (hours)			
	EO	EO(F)	PEO	CRE
201 inspections (programmed A to non-compliant D plus outstanding C premises from 2017/18)	0	402	64	40
180 new inspections (premises registering during the 2019/20 period) plus 37 from 2018/19	0	434	69	43
180-200 compliant D and E rated premises inspections (not suitable for AES)	0	180	20	27
316-336 compliant D (low risk foods) and E rated premises AES interventions (suitable for AES)	128	128	0	84
Revisits to non-compliant premises	0	53	0	0
FHRS administration and revisits to re-rate	0	56	28	0
Infectious disease investigation	250	80	0	0
Food complaint investigation	0	460	0	0
Sampling activity	25	40	5	0
Attendance/input at Bucks Food Group, EHLG and other food related forums	0	0	140	0
Food incidents and alerts	0	20	0	0
Provision of food business advice	0	180	0	50
Management and administration of food service	0	20	700	400
Formal enforcement activity and legal cases	70	300	70	0

Training and CPD	20	60	35	0
Support of EHTOs undertaking EHO qualification (food element)	0	60	30	0
Work on implementation of public health agenda	0	15	0	0
Food/Health Promotion activities	0	20	20	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>2508</b>	<b>1181</b>	<b>644</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4182 hours = 2.61 FTE</b> <b>4826 hours (including CRE)</b> <b>= 3.02 FTE</b>			

PEO = Principal Enforcement Officer EO = Enforcement Officer EO (F) = Food Competent CRE = Customer Relationship Team

An FTE post amounts to approximately 1600 working hours per annum. The above figures are an approximation based on the information available regarding the provision of the food service in 2018/19 and known demands within the 2019/20 period. Due to acknowledged gaps within the database it is likely that these figures do not take into account additional factors such as the increased demand of reactive work in other areas during the summer months, staff sickness and considerable travel time to and from food premises. They also do not take into account the unpredictable demands that can be placed on the food service by incidents such as a large food poisoning outbreak, a complex prosecution case, a serious workplace accident investigation or a major pollution incident.

#### 4.2 Staffing Allocation

The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff allocated to the provision of the food service is currently 2.9. This consists of 4 food qualified Enforcement Officers and one Principal Enforcement Officer (PEHO) as well as administrative Customer Relationship staff. Each of the Officers spends approximately 50% of their time on food service work. The PEHO also spends approximately 50% of their time on work associated with the delivery of food controls. There is administrative support provided to these officers by the Customer Relationship team and the Systems Administration Team which is equivalent to 0.37 of a FTE post. The non-food

qualified Enforcement Officers provide support to the Officers in some areas of food service work and this is reflected in the table.

The FTE staff allocation for the provision of the 2018/19 food service was 2.9. In the 2019/20 period this staff allocation has remained the same. There is a £14,000 specialist advice budget within the 2019/20 expenditure allocation food service budget to allow the department to buy in contractor inspections to assist with meeting intervention targets as necessary. This amount is equivalent to a 0.26 FTE post.

#### 4.3 Staff Development Plan

The Food Standard Agency's Code of Practice was revised in April 2015. The section concerning the Qualifications and Experience was updated and local authorities were given 12 months to implement the revised requirements.

The Food Law Code of Practice requires authorised food officers to complete a minimum of 20 hours per year of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training. These hours are split into:

- 10 hours- core food matters directly related to the delivery of official controls
- 10 hours- other professional matters including training needs identified by Team Managers and Principal Enforcement Officer during competency assessments/appraisals

As part of the Buckinghamshire Food Group, Aylesbury Vale District Council supports and engages with the other districts and partners to assist in running a low cost food training courses throughout the year. Environmental Health Officers will attend both external and internal cascade training courses during the course of the year, some of which are organised by the Food Standards Agency. Where Officers attend courses that are of use to the rest of the Enforcement Team staff this information is delivered via cascade training and course resources made available to others. Officers are required to keep records of the CPD training that they complete. Officers take part in Food Standards Agency consistency exercises and food service consistency is regularly discussed at monthly team meetings. This will continue in 2019/20.

## 5. Quality Assessment

### 5.1 Quality Assessment and Internal Monitoring

During the 2012/13 period new procedures for monitoring the accuracy, quality and consistency of the delivery of the food service were introduced. Details of the monitoring arrangements in place are set out within the departmental procedures 'Food Database Management Procedure' and 'Food Service Monitoring, Audit and Review Procedure'. The food service is subject to a rolling programme of review by the Internal Audit Team. Consistency within the FHRS is also an item on the Buckinghamshire Food Group meeting agenda.

## 6. Review

### 6.1 Review against the Service Plan

The table below details the number of interventions that formed part of the programme in 2018/19. Category A premises should receive an inspection 6 months after the previous intervention, where as a category C is inspected at 18 month intervals. A number of factors influence when an inspection is due including the number of people the business supplies food to and how compliant the business is with legislative requirements.

The number of interventions completed in 2018/19 by risk category:

<b>2018/19</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>Unrated</b>	<b>Total</b>
Interventions completed	5	43	202	216	167	37	670
Interventions outstanding	0	0	0	17	28	52	97

% interventions achieved	100%	100%	100%	92.1%	83.2%	n/a number varies monthly	92.9% (Excl. unrated)
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The total number of interventions remained similar to 2017/18. All of the highest risk premises (A rated and B rated premises) were inspected along with all the C rated premises.

The Food Standards Agency provides categorisation of when a business is deemed to be broadly compliant with the law based on their risk scores at inspection.

The number of broadly compliant businesses by risk category:

<b>2017/18</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total number of premises	3	36	278	532	614	1463
Number broadly compliant	0	20	266	531	614	1431
% Broadly compliant	0%	55.56%	95.68%	99.81%	100%	97.81%

The figures relating to compliance of food businesses has remained very consistent over the previous periods (2013/14 96.47%, 2014/15 96.93%, 2015/16 97.08%, 2016/17 97.5%, 2017/18 98%). As almost 100% of D and E rated premises are broadly compliant, this provides justification for the targeting of resources towards A-C rated and newly registered premises. It is important to note that A or B rated premises are not necessarily non-compliant businesses but may be high-risk because of the type of food activities carried out.

The areas of improvement identified in the previous Food Service Plan are discussed within this document. The areas have been completed or are identified as ongoing in the 2019/20 improvement areas below. In the period 2019/20 delivery

against this service plan will be reviewed and the Principal Enforcement Officer will update the Cabinet Member for Waste and Licensing.

## 6.2 Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan

As part of the review process any variance from the service plan will be identified and detailed within the report. Reasons for the variance will be given and any necessary improvement plans for the following 6 month period identified.

## 6.3 Unitary

It was announced on 1 November 2018 that from 1 April 2020 the 5 separate councils that exist within Buckinghamshire (4 districts and 1 county) will cease to exist and a new Buckinghamshire Council will be created. During 2019/20 the councils will begin the preparations for the creation of the new authority. It is anticipated that as each of the councils currently operate their Environmental Health services in slightly different ways, initially it will be business as usual post 1 April 2020. It is during the current year that we will need to ensure that the new authority is able to operate in a safe and legal manner from its creation and this will be a focus for the Principal Enforcement Officer and Team Managers.

#### 6.4 Areas of Improvement

Prior the formation of the new unitary Buckinghamshire Council the primary focus for 2019/20 will be to ensure that our database is accurate and that we begin work to align systems and procedures with the other Buckinghamshire Authorities. This will help to enable a smooth transition to a Unitary Authority. However, the service plan has identified the following areas for improvement in delivery of the food service over the 2019/20 period:

- Continue to review the premises database with a focus on category E rated premises to ensure that where appropriate, these premises are correctly classified as outside the programme. This will improve the database accuracy and ensure resources are targeted to those requiring intervention and based on risk to public health.
- Enforcement Officers will be encouraged to undertake more targeted partial inspections for some category C premises and for the majority of D rated premises such as pubs and restaurants with broadly compliant hygiene scores or higher. We believe that there are many advantages of an inspection compared with sending a questionnaire; businesses also tell us they prefer an inspection as an opportunity to speak to a food safety officer. A partial inspection will also help reduce the inspection time meaning we can focus more time and resource on those businesses that are non-compliant.
- Enforcement Officers are to continue to target D and E Rated premises who did not return questionnaires last year. If necessary inspections will be carried out. This work will improve the accuracy of our database.
- Continue to promote our 'New Food Business Advice Service'
- Continue to keep abreast of current issues, (particularly Regulating our Future and Brexit) and cascade information to businesses as required.
- Investigate and implement a system to charge for FHRS re inspections to ensure that these costs can be recovered where possible.
- Ensure that we participate in the PHE sampling programmes for 2019/20 and that sampling is undertaken where appropriate to enhance our food safety

interventions (i.e. to assist with educating food business operators and to assist in the evaluation of food hygiene procedures)

Whilst it is not an area specifically highlighted for improvement, we will work with other existing Buckinghamshire authorities with respect to the formation of the new Buckinghamshire Council which by its nature will bring improvements to the food service in future years. Our primary objective will be to ensure we can operate a safe and legal service from 1 April 2020.

*Produced by Neil Green, Principal Enforcement Officer (Environmental Health)*

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