

SUBJECT:	FOOD AND HEALTH AND SAFETY BUSINESS PLANS
REPORT OF:	Councillor Paul Kelly – Healthy Communities Portfolio Holder
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WARD/S AFFECTED	All

1. Purpose of Report

To obtain Cabinet approval for the adoption of the joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan for the year 2016/2017.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To approve the joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan at **Appendix 1**
- To approve the Food and Health and Safety Enforcement Policies at **Appendices 2 and 3**

2. Reasons for Recommendations

The Food Standards Agency's (FSA) Code of Practice and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) require local authorities to produce and publish an annual service plan that demonstrates how the authorities are working to deliver its food safety and health and safety services. The Better Regulation Delivery Officer also requires local authorities to produce and publish their enforcement policies and to ensure that they comply with The Regulator's Code.

3. Content of Report

- 3.1 The Food and Health and Safety Service Business Plan details how the food and health and safety enforcement services are to be delivered within both Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council areas for the year 2016/17.
- 3.2 The Service Plan is divided into the issues covered by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Framework Agreement and the key priorities identified by the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Strategy Document. The Service Plan and Enforcement Policies are appended.

Food Safety Service 2016/17

- 3.3 In 2012, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils launched the Food Standards Agency's national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. Since then the percentage of all eligible rated food premises (rating of 3 or better) has increased and is currently 96% for both Chiltern and South Bucks Councils. This improvement is a clear indication that the introduction of the scheme has encouraged businesses to raise their standards coupled with the targeted mentoring and coaching of those businesses that are not broadly compliant. Whilst the main approach to inspections is supportive, where businesses persistently fail to engage or improve standards, then more formal enforcement action will continue to be taken.

- 3.4 The inspection performance indicator has been amended to measure the percentage of food businesses that have changed from not being broadly compliant to being broadly compliant. This measure better reflects the impact of the officer's work in achieving improved outcomes and levels of compliance.
- 3.5 During 2015, an Environmental Health service review took place with the aim of improving service quality and resilience and identifying potential savings through sharing services between Chiltern DC and South Bucks DC. A shared Environmental Health, Sustainability & Resilience service came into effect on 1st December 2015 that introduced a new structure and incorporated a specific Business Support Team whose role it would be to deliver Official Control interventions, respond to food and health and safety related complaints and accidents and to provide training and support for local businesses. Previously these functions were delivered in Chiltern DC by generic EHOs who also responded to environmental protection service requests. During the service review, specific areas of work were identified, relating to bringing together the procedures and processes of the two authorities, improving business compliance and generating income. These are reflected in the service plan action plan.

Health and Safety Service 2016/17

- 3.6 Whilst health and safety remains a key priority for the Government, it aims to reduce the inspection burden on businesses. The consequence of this is that officers will only inspect businesses where there is a specific need, either due to local or national intelligence and the national strategic priorities. These priorities cover a range of sector specific interventions and cross-cutting themes. As a result of a number of fatalities in 2015/16, the topic based inspections will be related to health and safety measures to protect employees from falls from height and workplace transport accidents and raising awareness of the importance of communication between landlords and tenants and in particular maintenance responsibilities and reporting.

Food Policy and Health and Safety Enforcement Policy

- 3.7 Both policies reflect the principles set out in the Regulators' Code issued by the Better Regulation Delivery Office of the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills. The key principles are to supporting growth, engaging with businesses, having a transparent and risk based approach to activities, sharing information between regulators and providing clear information and advice to businesses. The Regulators' Code applies to local authority regulatory services such as: environmental health, licensing, housing standards, planning enforcement, building control and revenues and benefits. A corporate enforcement policy will be developed in compliance with the Code and will be the subject of a future Cabinet report.

4. Consultation

The Healthy Communities PAG considered the draft Plan at its meeting on 13 June and supports the proposals

5. Options

Subject to comments from Cabinet on the proposed approach and content, the adoption of a Food and Health and Safety Service Plan is a requirement of the respective statutory regulators

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Financial – the service plan will delivered within existing budgets

6.2 Legal – The Food Standards Agency requires local authorities to produce and publish a food service plan, as does the Health and Safety Executive for health and safety and local authorities are audited by these Government bodies for compliance against the statutory guidance. The FSA audit reports are public documents and published on the FSA website.

7. Links to Council Policy Objectives

The plan stems from the Healthy Communities Service Plan and makes a positive contribution towards the Chiltern District and South Bucks Councils' *Joint Business Plan 2015 – 2020* and *Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 – 2026*. The plan links into the Councils' Performance Management Framework.

8. Next Steps

The approved action plan for the service plan will be implemented across both local authorities.

Background	None other than those referred to in the report
Papers:	