

SUBJECT:	FOOD AND HEALTH AND SAFETY BUSINESS PLANS
REPORT OF:	<i>Healthy Communities – Councillor Patrick Hogan</i>
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	<i>Steve Bambrick, Acting Chief Executive Martin Holt, Head of Healthy Communities</i>
REPORT AUTHOR	<i>Ian Snudden, 01494 732057, isnudden@chilternandsouthbucks.gov.uk</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED	<i>All</i>

1. Purpose of Report

To obtain Members' approval for the adoption of the joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan and Food and Health and Safety Enforcement Policies for the year 2019/2020.

The Policy Advisory Group is requested to advise the Portfolio Holder on the following recommendations to Cabinet:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To approve the joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan
- To approve the Food and Health and Safety Enforcement Policies

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 Office for Product Safety and Standards also requires local authorities to produce and publish their enforcement policies and to ensure that they comply with The Regulator's Code.

3. Report

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 2019/20.

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 2019/20

Since the introduction of the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, the percentage of all eligible rated food premises (rating of 3 or better) continues to increase and is currently 96% for Chiltern and 97% for South Bucks District Councils, higher than the national average of 95.3%. 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. Officers will continue to focus on the highest risk businesses and those that have a

rating of 0-2. In 2018/19, significant enforcement activity took place and four food businesses were successfully prosecuted with fines being issued in the Crown Court of up to £33,000 and substantial costs being awarded.

Specific areas of work have been identified in relation to continual service improvement and flexible mobile working and increased commercialisation of the service. The Food Standards Agency is still examining how regulatory interventions are delivered and is continuing to consult on its model 'Regulating Our Future'. The Agency is also issuing guidance to both local authorities and businesses in relation to preparation for the UK to depart the EU. Officers are also monitoring the impact that the UK's exit from the EU will have on food safety delivery and how services will be delivered in the future following the decision to move to unitary authority status. These are reflected in the service plan action plan.

Health and Safety Service 2018/19

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. In 2018/19 enforcement action was taken against a number of animal petting establishments for poor hygiene and safety arrangements.

Food Policy and Health and Safety Enforcement Policy

Both policies reflect the principles set out in the Regulators' Code issued by the Better Regulation Delivery Office (now the Office of Product Safety and Standards). 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 has been developed and the policies have been drafted in accordance with this overarching policy.

4. Consultation

Not Applicable

5. Options

Not Applicable

6. Corporate Implications

- 6.1 Financial – the service plan will be 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 Step

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

Background Papers:	It is a legal requirement that we make available any background papers relied on to prepare the report and should be listed at the end of the report (copies of Part 1 background papers for executive decisions must be provided to Democratic Services)
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