



LR.04 11/12
Licensing and Regulatory Committee
6 June 2011

Subject: Food, Health and Safety Service Plan 2011-2012

Report by:	Director of Neighbourhoods and Health
Contact Officer:	Mrs Joanna Riddell Regulatory and Community Health Team Leader 01427 675113 joanna.riddell@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To present the 2011/2012 Food, Health and Safety Service Plan for consideration and approval. Appendix A To present a summary of the activities carried out by the Food Health and Safety Team in 2010-2011.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1) That the Food, Health and Safety Service Plan be received, noted and approved.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The production of the Food, Health and Safety Service Plan is a statutory requirement.

Financial:

None.

Staffing:

None.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

Not applicable.

Risk Assessment:

Attached.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

None.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement March 2011 (as amended) – Food Standards Agency Website

Health and Safety Commission (Section 18) Guidance – Health and Safety Commission Website

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

Yes

No

Key Decision:

Yes

No

1 Background – Food Service Plan

1.1 The Food Standards Agency has set minimum enforcement standards that are expected of Local Authorities in food law enforcement. These are described in detail in a “Framework Agreement” which the Local Authority is required to implement.

1.2 The Framework Agreement consists of four elements:

- **Standard** – Building on existing central guidance and Code of Practice, this sets out the key areas of food law enforcement and the relevant management arrangements and targets against which the Agency will monitor and audit local authority service delivery.
- **Service Planning Guidance** – This provides guidance to ensure that key areas of enforcement covered by the food law enforcement Standard are covered in local service plans, whilst allowing appropriate scope for flexibility and inclusion of any locally defined objectives.
- **Monitoring Scheme** – This sets out arrangements for the Agency to obtain information from local authorities on their food law enforcement activity and quantitative information on their performance in areas such as inspection rates, inspection focus and enforcement actions.
- **Audit Scheme** – This provides for a rolling programme of audits by the Agency to provide a more complete and qualitative assessment of the local authority food law enforcement service, identifying conformance against the Standard, best practice and areas for improvement.

1.3 Amongst other things, the Authority must draw up, document and implement a service plan in accordance with the Service Planning Guidance.

1.4 Service Plans are seen by the Food Standards Agency as an important part of the process to ensure national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally. The Service Plan can also:

- focus debate on key delivery issues;
- provide an essential link with financial planning;
- set objectives for the future and identify major issues that cross service boundaries; and
- provide a means of managing performance and making performance comparisons

- 1.5 The Food Standards Agency has provided Local Authorities with a service planning template to ensure that all the areas of the food enforcement service are covered in the plan.

2 Background – Health and Safety Service Plan

- 2.1 Virtually identical provisions relate to the Health and Safety Service Plan as apply to the Food Service Plan. The Health and Safety Service Plan is a key document in our being able to demonstrate to the Health and Safety Executive/Commission that ‘adequate arrangements’ have been made by the Local Authority for the enforcement of Health and Safety legislation.
- 2.2 The main components are planned general inspections; planned enforcement initiatives; investigation of accidents; investigation of complaints; advice; visits to new premises; revisits to check and the allocation of total resources to each component.
- 2.3 Wherever possible priority is being given to topic based inspections and partnership projects and through these significant contributions will be made to local and national priorities and targets.

3 Summary of Food Health and Safety Activity 2010-2011.

- 3.1 The food hygiene and health and safety activities carried out in 2010-2011 including requests for service, accidents, etc. have been included in relevant tables within the 2011-2012 Service Plan.
- 3.2 During 2010 the team experienced a number of pressures which resulted in some activity not being carried out as planned. The main pressure related to a large food hygiene prosecution which culminated in a three week Crown Court trial and took many officer hours of preparation. I am pleased to say that our efforts were rewarded by the operator being convicted of 21 hygiene offences and he received a suspended prison sentence.
- 3.3 The team also experienced some staffing pressures within 2010 due to a combination of long term sickness and a vacancy which proved difficult to recruit to.
- 3.4 In order to address the potential compromise in the delivery of planned work a collaborative working project was developed between West Lindsey District Council and the City of Lincoln Council. The project involved the sharing of resources to deliver planned outcomes. The Regulatory and Community Health Team Leader providing management support in exchange for City of Lincoln environmental health personnel undertaking programmed inspections.

- 3.5 The collaboration resulted in 92% of programmed food hygiene inspections being completed and 89% of programmed health and safety inspections. All high risk inspections were completed. In addition the Council has learnt a great deal about the benefits of collaborative working, the lessons from which will be used to address future pressures in a timely fashion

4 Service Developments

- 4.1 At Community and Waste Committee on the 9th February Members approved the introduction of fees and charges for the Food Hygiene Star Award Scheme.
- 4.2 Enhancement to the existing scheme includes the provision of promotional materials, at a charge of £50 and rescoring the business, at a charge of £200, where significant improvements have been made. It is considered that these amendments to the scheme will encourage businesses to improve and maintain their hygiene standards. It will also generate income for the service.
- 4.3 In February the Red Snapper Group were commissioned to undertake a survey of 750 businesses to ascertain how they felt about the Food/Health and Safety Service and to consider service improvements. This was a partnership survey and the cost was shared between both parties. Analysis of the survey clearly showed that the businesses valued the service and favour the current method of delivery. 99% of businesses also valued the Food Hygiene Star Award Scheme. A full copy of the analysis is attached as Appendix B.