



Regulatory Committee

Thursday 9th June 2022

Subject: Food and Health and Safety Work Plan 2022/23

Report by:

Assistant Director for Change Management and
Regulatory Services

Contact Officer:

Andy Gray
Housing and Enforcement Manager

andy.gray@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To provide Committee with the Food, Health and
Safety Work Plan 2022/2023 for approval.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

Committee are asked to:

- a) Approve the Food, Health and Safety Work Plan as detailed at Appendix 1.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The provision of this document is a statutory requirement and it is completed in line with the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement.

Financial: FIN/35/23/SSC

There are no financial implications within this report.

Staffing :

The report identifies the staffing resource available to the service and how they are deployed in order to meet the Council's statutory responsibilities.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

There are no implications noted.

Data Protection Implications :

There are no implications noted.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

There are no implications noted.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :

There are no direct implications within this report. In line with the Council's Corporate Enforcement Policy this work area seeks to ensure that other agencies are engaged where necessary to address specific concerns.

Health Implications:

The delivery of an effective Food and Health and Safety Work Plan has a clear and direct impact on the health of the Districts residents. The plan seeks to ensure that Food Hygiene Standards are maintained in line with legislation and that Health and Safety incidents are investigated accordingly.

During the period of 2021/2022, the service played a direct role in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This response was based on the work areas resources being re-directed to address Covid-19 related concerns, to enforce the new Coronavirus Regulations and to respond to any Outbreak Management concerns in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council Public Health.

At the time of writing the 2022/2023 work plan, there are no such restrictions in place, however the service is still working in line with the FSA recovery plan, which was developed during the pandemic and is continually reviewed.

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

None noted.

Risk Assessment :

Maintaining Food Hygiene Inspection Requirements – the ability to deliver statutory obligations will continue to be impacted by Covid-19 and the Council will continue to work to the FSA guidance in relation to this.

Covid-19 – any major outbreaks or changes to local restrictions impact on the ability of the service to deliver its core functions. This position is continually reviewed in line with the Governments guidance and local infection rates.

Call in and Urgency:**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes**No****Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes**No**

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council is required to produce and approve a work plan that is in line with the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement and the Statement of Commitment agreed nationally between Local Authority Representatives and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This plan covers all work undertaken within the Housing and Environmental Enforcement work area relating to Food and Health and Safety.
- 1.2. The purpose of the work plan is to set out how the Council delivers its official controls and fulfils its duties under food, health and safety, public health and drinking water legislation.

2. Content

- 2.1. The work plan is attached as appendix 1. The plan reflects the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had upon the work area in relation to delivering its statutory functions for food hygiene.
- 2.2. Information on performance and the inspection regime are shown in sections 8 and 9 of appendix 1.

3. Covid – 19 Impact

- 3.1. From the outset of the pandemic, this service has been severely impacted in its ability to deliver the usual obligations in relation to food safety. The cohort of officers allocated to this work were immediately identified and delegated by Government to provide the frontline response within the majority of Local Authority Coronavirus Regulations.
- 3.2. During 21/22, there were less requirements across this cohort of officers to respond directly to covid-19 related issues. This was generally in line with the Government's roadmap for living with covid, which has reduced restrictions generally across most sectors.
- 3.3. The objectives that were originally set out in terms of inspection figures at the commencement of the 21/22 work plan varied as they year progressed. The Council has met all of the required targets within the FSA (Food Standards Agency) Recovery Plan and achieved a total of 87% of inspections completed against the initial target from April 21.
- 3.4. The overall request for service are still increased however have decreased significantly in line with the reduction of covid-19 related restrictions. In 21/22 there were 395 service requests, down from 875 in 20/21. In 19/20 there were 354.

4. Service Demand in 21/22

- 4.1. The table below shows the demand placed on the service over the last 4 years

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total Routine Planned Food Hygiene Inspections (A to D)	358	372	291	198
Completed Food Hygiene Inspections	248 (67%)	347 (92.5%)	18 n/a	172 (87%)
Food Inspection Visits (inc abortive)	268	401	39 (M38)	210
Food Inspection Revisits (additional)	47	25	4 (M24)	26
Request for Revisit (FHRS)	20	16	0	2
Food / H&S Complaints and Service Requests (note 2020/21 figure includes covid related complaints and service requests)	334	354	875	395
Service Requests Requiring a Premises Visit (additional)	35	45	5	28
Accident Investigations	6	2	12	2
RIDDOR Reports	42	37	50	64
Infectious Disease Reports	74	41	23	50
Sampling Undertaken	0	37	4	0

4.2. The figure of 198 total routine planned food hygiene inspections (A to D) reflected the number of inspections required within the FSA Recovery plan to the end of March 22. During 21/22 officers took the opportunity to include other non-recovery plan premises within the inspection regime and in a normal programmed inspection year, the total number of premises requiring inspection would have been 554.

4.3. There is a level of uncaptured demand that relates to general advice and queries that arise as part of the day to day work relating to food and health and safety. The offering of advice provides additional value to businesses in the district and help to ensure that strong relationships are in place.

5. Approach to Food Hygiene Inspections in 22/23

5.1. The Food Law Code of Practice (March 2021) provides opportunity for a range of interventions in relation to food premises. The approach that the Council takes regarding these interventions is linked to its corporate enforcement policy, which officers have regard for when making any decision. The planned programme of intervention is shown in the table below:

Category	Inspection Frequency	No of Premises
A	6 months	4
B	12 months	25

C	18 months	114
D	24 months	212
E	36 months	398
UNRATED		92

5.2. The above table represents a normal routine inspection programme for the Year 2022/23 of 845. Of these, 447 require a physical food inspection hygiene inspection, and 398 category E are inspected via an Alternative Enforcement Strategy. During 21/22 the FSA have set out within their Recovery Plan how they wish for the Council to approach the inspection regime. This is set out in the table below;



5.3. The FSA have also stated that there has been a significant increase in the number of food businesses where the risks associated with them remain largely unknown as initial inspections have not been undertaken. The FSA have also stated that there is anecdotal information suggesting that there has been a general trend of reducing hygiene standards in food establishments since the onset of the pandemic. The above two points may impact on delivery against the service plan in the short to medium term. This again, may require further resources, which will be monitored ongoing.

5.4. Food hygiene inspections undertaken which do not form part of the routine inspection programme are estimated to add a further 20 to 30% to these figures. Non-routine inspections include: -

- Paid for food hygiene inspections undertaken as part of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.
- Food hygiene inspections undertaken as part of a complaint investigation.
- New food businesses opening after 1st April 2022.
- Changes to the risk rating, resulting in more frequent inspection.

Therefore, the true food inspection programme, comprising of both the routine planned and unplanned inspection program's is estimated at between 536 and 581 food hygiene inspections required in the current financial year.

6. Resources

- 6.1. There are currently four officers authorised to undertake both food and health and safety related work within the Council. Due to other service demands, this equates to 2 FTEs for food, and 0.1 FTE for health and safety, in relation to the operational delivery of the service. A further 0.3 FTE, towards delivery of the food and health & safety function, is provided by administrative support.
- 6.2. Operational delivery of the service is currently complemented by 1.2 FTE temporary contractors. There is a potential for a further 0.3 FTE to be re-assigned to operational service delivery, dependent on service demands placed upon the food and health & safety manager / lead food officer.
- 6.3. The additional 1.2 FTE contractors have clearly made a significant difference to the inspection regime. This resource, coupled with the removal of covid restrictions, resulted in more inspections being undertaken in quarter 4 than in the previous three quarters. Alongside this, one officer was still completing their competency assessment.
- 6.4. The current resources do not allow for proactive health and safety work, and only minimal reactive health and safety work to be undertaken.
- 6.5. It is believed that moving forward an additional 1 FTE, taking the total available to 3 FTEs would provide the Council with a resource that would ensure that its food hygiene requirements could be met, along with its health and safety requirements.
- 6.6. The current 1.2 FTE contractors will be with the Council until the end of 22/23. During this period officers will be working with Management Team to determine how best to put in place any additional resources required.

END