



ARTICLE NO: 2B

**CORPORATE OVERVIEW &
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MEMBERS UPDATE 2011/12

Article of: Director of People and Places

Relevant Head of Service: Assistant Director Community Services

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SUBJECT: FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2011 - 2012

Wards affected: Borough wide.

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE ARTICLE

- 1.1 To provide Members with information about the Food Safety Service Plan for 2011-2012, (attached as Appendix 2).

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is an independent food safety watchdog set up by an Act of Parliament in 2000 to protect the public's health and consumer interests in relation to food.
- 2.2 The FSA provides information and advice to the public and Government on food safety issues from farm to fork, nutrition and diet. It also protects consumers through effective food enforcement and monitoring.
- 2.3 Food safety enforcement work is primarily the responsibility of Local Authorities and this Council works to fulfil these duties and protect the health of residents and the wider community by ensuring that all commercial production of food in the Borough is carried out safely and is fit for human consumption.
- 2.4 One of the key roles of the Food Standards Agency is the responsibility for setting and monitoring standards and auditing Local Authorities' enforcement activities, in order to ensure this activity is effective and undertaken on a consistent basis.

- 2.5 Food Safety Service Plans are seen by the FSA as an important part of the process to ensure local authorities address national priorities and standards and deliver them locally. It sees the Food Safety Service Plans will 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.
- 2.6 In their guidance, the FSA has requested such plans have a common format. This enables the FSA to assess local authorities' delivery of service but also enables local authorities to analyse and compare their performance with each other. Service Plans are also seen by the FSA as an expression of a local authority's own commitment to the development of their food service.
- 2.7 Members have agreed that the approval of Annual Food Safety Service Plans would be delegated to the Assistant Director Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Health. Also, that the Food Safety Service Plan would be circulated to Members as part of a Members' Update.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 The Food Safety Service Plan for 2010/2011, as agreed by Members last year, has been implemented. Performance against that Service Plan has now been reviewed and the conclusions of the review are contained in the draft Service Plan for 2011/12.
- 3.2 The Service achieved 85% of all food premises inspections that were due in 2010/11. this compared with a Performance Target of 90% which was reduced due to a reduction of 0.5 FTE in the Environmental Health officer staffing within the Service from 1st October 2009. The performance achieved also reflects the pro-rata absences of a part-time Environmental health Officer post and a part-time Environmental Health Assistant post which were both vacant for a period of time during 2010-2011.
- 3.3 The Food Safety Service Plan for 2011/2012 has been developed and is attached to this report as an Appendix and consists of the following details:

Section 1	-	Service Aims and objectives
Section 2	-	Background
Section 3	-	Service Delivery
Section 4	-	Resources

Section 5 - Quality Assessment

Section 6 - Review

- 3.4 The Food Safety Service Plan provides a detailed view of the work of the Food Safety Service. It shows how the Service's aims and objectives are linked into the Council's corporate priorities and values. It details the services provided and used, along with the demands that are made on the Service.
- 3.5 A full breakdown is then provided of the proposed Premises Inspection and Intervention Programme for 2011/2012, the Food Sampling Programme and the proposed responses to a range of requests for service.
- 3.6 As well as reviewing performance for 2010/2011, the Service Plan also details proposed areas for improvement and changes for 2011/2012.
- 3.7 The Performance Target for 2011-2012 is for 90% of food premises inspections due to be completed reflects the reduction in staffing within the Service from 1st October 2009 and its on-going effect over 2011-2012. Even this target will be difficult to achieve due to the absence of a part-time Environmental Health Officer on maternity leave for most of 2011-2012.
- 3.8 In order to provide local transparency and accountability, in addition to the Food Safety Service Plan being submitted to Members, copies will also be sent to the Consultant in Health Protection for the West Lancashire area, to the HPA Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Network (Preston laboratory) and to the Lancashire County Analyst.
- 3.9 A copy of the Service Plan will again be put onto the Council's Web-site for public information and with an opportunity for comments to be made on the content of the Service Plan. Existing Customer Surveys involving the Food Safety Service will again continue and give members of the public a further opportunity to comment on the work of the Service.

4.0 ISSUES

- 4.1 The FSA 'Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement' specifies the arrangement to be put in place and operated by a local authority for the enforcement of food hygiene legislation.
- 4.2 One of the requirements of the Framework Agreement document is that a local authority shall draw up, document and implement a service delivery plan in accordance with the FSA guidance. The document also requires that the service delivery plan is submitted for appropriate Member approval.
- 4.3 By submitting the Food Safety Service Plan to Members it fulfils the requirements of the FSA Framework Agreement.

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

5.1 The Food Safety Service Plan provides an expression of the Council's commitment to the development of the food safety service. This Service contributes significantly towards improving the health of the local communities within West Lancashire.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The costs associated with production of the Food Safety Service Plan have been met from existing budgets.

6.2 The Plan describes what work will be carried out by the Service. The costs of this work will be met from existing budgets.

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 The Food Safety Service Plan describes the financial and resource implications for the Food Safety Service, which will be met from existing budgets. If adequate staffing resources were not available, the Council may not be able to deliver an effective food safety service as required by the FSA.

Background Documents

The following background documents (as defined in Section 100D (5) of the Local Government Act 1972) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing this Report.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>File Ref</u>
12.03.2001	Food Standards Agency 'Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement'	
June 2008	Food Standards Agency "Food Law" Code of Practice	
March 2006	Food Standards Agency "Food Law" "Guidance"	
	The Council's Corporate Performance Plan for 2011-2012	
	Food Safety Service – Food Sampling Policy	
	Food Safety Service – Food Sampling Programme for 2011/12	
	The West Lancashire Profile	

Equality Impact Assessment

There is a significant direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is required. A formal equality impact assessment is attached as an Appendix to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report.

Appendices

1. Equality Impact Assessment
2. Annual Food Safety Service Plan 2011-12

Appendix 1

Equality Impact Assessment

Question 1

Using information that you have gathered from service monitoring, surveys, consultation, and other sources such as anecdotal information fed back by members of staff, in your opinion, could your service/policy/strategy/decision (including decisions to cut or change a service or policy) disadvantage, or have a potentially disproportionately negative effect on, any of the following groups of people:

- People of different ages – including young and older people
- People with a disability
- People of different races/ethnicities/nationalities
- Men
- Women
- People of different religions/beliefs
- People of different sexual orientations
- People who are or have identified as transgender
- People who are married or in a civil partnership
- Women who are pregnant or on maternity leave or men whose partners are pregnant or on maternity leave
- People living in areas of deprivation or who are financially disadvantaged

No, there is no adverse effect.

Potentially, there could be an adverse effect on non-English speaking businesses workplaces and their ability to comply with food safety legislation. However, this Council, the Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency have provided suitable guidance in a range of languages to help and support businesses to comply with such legislation. Therefore, such businesses are able to achieve compliance.

Question 2

What sources of information have you used to come to this decision?

Guidance documents, leaflets and booklets published by the Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency, relating to food safety issues.

Question 3

How have you tried to involve people/groups in developing your service/policy/strategy or in making your decision (including decisions to cut or change a service or policy)?

The Food Standards Agency have involved a range of groups in developing their guidance on food safety matters, which is used for a range of communities on a national basis.

Question 4

Could your service/policy/strategy or decision (including decisions to cut or change a service or policy) help or hamper our ability to meet our duties under the Equality Act 2010? Duties are to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity (removing or minimising disadvantage, meeting the needs of people)
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it

No. The actions detailed in this report aim to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, as well as with relevant legislation and national best practice guidance.

Question 5

What actions will you take to address any issues raised in your answers above?

Through the Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency, this Council will continue to provide suitable guidance in a range of languages to help and support businesses to comply with food safety legislation.