



ARTICLE NO:

**CORPORATE & ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE:**

**MEMBERS UPDATE 2018/19
ISSUE 2**

Article of: Director of Leisure and Environment

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SUBJECT: FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2018 / 19

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE ARTICLE

- 1.1 To provide Members with information about the Food Safety Service Plan operating during 2018/19.
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2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is an independent Government department responsible for food safety and hygiene across the UK. The FSA works with businesses to help them produce safe food and with Local Authorities to enforce food safety regulations.
- 2.2 Food safety enforcement is primarily the responsibility of Local Authorities. Accordingly, this Council fulfils these duties through its Food Safety Service (the Service) which aims to ensure all commercial food production in the Borough is carried out safely and is fit for human consumption - thereby protecting the health of West Lancashire residents and the wider community.
- 2.3 One of the key roles of the FSA is to set and monitor enforcement standards within Local Authorities. The FSA 'Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities' (the Framework Agreement) specifies the arrangements that should be established and maintained by a Local Authority to enforce food hygiene legislation. It is this document that requires the Council to formulate and implement a service delivery plan in accordance with FSA guidance.
- 2.4 Accordingly, the FSA places significant emphasis on Food Safety Service Plans as a means to:

- Ensure Local Authorities address national priorities and standards, so these can be delivered locally;
- 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 method of managing performance and making performance comparisons.

2.5 FSA guidance also states that Service Plans should have a common format. This enables the FSA to assess service delivery nationwide and allows Local Authorities to compare performance. Service Plans are also seen by the FSA as an expression of a Local Authority's own commitment to the development of its Food Safety Service.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

3.1 Due to significant operational pressures placed on the Food Safety Service spanning the previous two financial years which resulted from the need to investigate a unique and international food incident, it was agreed that a formal service plan would not be published. That said, an operational plan for 2017/18 was put in place and the requirements of that plan for 2017/18 have been implemented. Performance against that Service Plan has been reviewed and the conclusions of the review are contained in the Food Safety Service Plan for 2018/19 (the Plan), which is attached to this update at Appendix 1.

3.2 It is a requirement of the Framework Agreement that the Plan is submitted for appropriate Member approval. Accordingly, the Constitution requires the Plan to be approved by the Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Safety and be submitted to the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information.

3.3 The Plan was approved by Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Safety on 13 August 2018.

3.4 In order to provide local transparency and accountability, a copy of the Plan has also been placed on the Council's website.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

4.1 The Plan provides an expression of the Council's commitment to the development of the Service, which contributes significantly toward improving the health of the local communities within West Lancashire.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The costs associated with production of the Plan and the work detailed in the Plan for 2018/19 can be met within existing resources.

6.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The Plan describes the financial and resource implications for the Service. If adequate resources are not made available to deliver an effective food safety service as required by the FSA, the Council may be open to criticism and/or potential audit and related action by the FSA.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

There is no evidence from an initial assessment of an adverse impact on equality in relation to the equality target groups.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Annual Food Safety Service Plan 2018/19