

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 5 July 2018

EAST SUFFOLK FOOD AND HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2018/2019 (REP1809)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Council is required to produce a Food and Health and Safety Service Plan in the format prescribed by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in its Framework Agreement on Local Authority Law Enforcement and as required by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), as set out in the National Local Authority Enforcement Code – Health & Safety at Work England, Scotland and Wales.
2. The Service Plan must be submitted for member approval and must be reviewed to identify the Council's performance against the Service Plan, any variance from the plan and areas for improvement in the service.
3. This year's Service Plan includes information on the Council's performance in meeting targets, set out in the Service Plan for 2017/18, and recommends to Council the approval of a Food and Health and Safety Service Plan for 2018/19.

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
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Wards Affected:	All
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Cabinet Member:	Councillor Mary Rudd, Cabinet Member for Community Health and Safety
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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) Framework Agreement and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) National Local Authority Enforcement Code require the Council to review its performance against the 2017/18 Food and Health and Safety Service Plan, identify any variance from the plan and areas for service improvement.
- 1.2 As well as reviewing past performance the Council is also required to approve a new Food and Health and Safety Service Plan for 2018/19 (Appendix A).

2 REVIEW OF SERVICE PLAN 2017/18

- 2.1 The Council's performance in meeting targets identified within the 2017/18 Service Plan, and any variance, is contained in paragraphs 7.1, 13.1 and 19.1 of this year's Service Plan, which is attached as Appendix A to this report.
- 2.2 Members' attention is also drawn to the key achievements delivered in 2017/18, which are set out in paragraphs 7.2, 13.2 and 19.2
- 2.3 Areas for service improvement are set out in paragraphs 8, 14 and 20.
- 2.4 The Councils' performance in 2017/18 is comparable with 2016/17 although further improvements have been achieved in the percentage of broadly compliant businesses, the number of food businesses with the highest rating in the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme and the number of food samples taken for surveillance and monitoring purposes.
- 2.5 This year's service plan shows the combined performance data for east Suffolk for 2017/18 and for comparative purposes the data previously reported for 2016/17 has also been combined. Agreement has been reached with the FSA and HSE to submit a single statutory return for East Suffolk Council in 2019 for performance in 2018/19.
- 2.6 At Suffolk Coastal's Scrutiny Committee in 2017 members asked for some comparative national data to benchmark east Suffolk's performance against. At the time of drafting this report the FSA were still to publish national performance data for 2017/18 and so the national performance data in the following table is derived from the 2016/17 information published on the FSA website.

	East Suffolk Performance 2017/18 (compared with 2016/17)	National Performance* 2016/17 (compared with 2015/16)
% food businesses Broadly Compliant	97%	89%
% Businesses Registered but Not Rated	2.1%	5%
% Change in Full-Time Equivalentents	+6.8%	-2.7%
% Food Hygiene Interventions achieved	90.6%	85%
% Change in Hygiene Complaints	+8.3%	+31.7%
% Change in food sampling	+61.6%	-11%

*If the FSA publish data for 2017/18 before the Committee meeting this information will be updated verbally at the meeting.

3 FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY REGULATING OUR FUTURE PROGRAMME

- 3.1 The FSA are currently reviewing their monitoring of local authority performance with a view to introducing a more comprehensive approach. The Agency are developing a balanced scorecard which can use Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) data, existing Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS) information and any other relevant internal and external data sources to provide a more rounded and up-to-date picture of the performance and effectiveness of local authorities. This will make it easier for councils to benchmark their performance against other similar authorities in the future. This should be available in the autumn following testing with a small number of local authorities.
- 3.2 New enhanced registration arrangements for food businesses are also being developed by the FSA which will be digitally enabled and which will allow easier access to information and guidance enabling new businesses to get things right from the start. The national system is due to go live in March 2019.
- 3.3 A new, more refined, risk assessment approach to the inspection of new businesses is also being developed which will involve the segmentation of food businesses at the time of registration. Some businesses supplying only low risk food, or those that are of limited scale and complexity will no longer receive an initial inspection and will only be inspected if further information or a complaint indicates that one is necessary.
- 3.4 Primary Authority National Inspection Strategies are also being progressed which could be applied to multi-site businesses that demonstrate high levels of compliance. The consequences of this could be fewer inspections of these businesses and re-targeting of local authority resource to businesses presenting the greatest risk to public health.
- 3.5 Further work is also underway at the FSA to develop a sustainable funding model for food safety regulatory activities where businesses bear the cost of regulation. This would require new primary legislation so the timing of any implementation is uncertain at this stage.

4 EAT OUT EAT WELL HEALTHIER FOOD AWARD

- 4.1 Following the success of the Eat out Eat Well Scheme designed to encourage and reward food businesses that provide healthy food choices on their menu, the scheme is being extended to take-away businesses. Take out Eat Well will be launched in September 2018.

5 PORT HEALTH

- 5.1 Meetings with various senior civil servants from Defra, the FSA and the Department for Exiting the EU have provided opportunities to promote the importance of imported food controls and influence thinking on what needs to be in place to enable us to continue delivering effective border controls post Brexit. It has also been an opportunity to promote PHILIS (Port Health Interactive Live Information System) and PHILIS Online which is undergoing further developed as a contingency arrangement should the UK lose access to TRACES, the European import declaration system.
- 5.2 In March 2018 PHILIS won the Local Government Chronical (LGC) Award for innovation.

6 HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO THE EAST SUFFOLK BUSINESS PLAN?

- 6.1 One of the Councils' three priorities within the East Suffolk Business Plan is economic growth and recognition that a strong local economy is essential for vibrant local communities. Given the importance of local food production, preparation and sale to local tourism, the food and safety service provides essential advice, guidance, training and regulation to ensure that local food businesses provide safe food and can prosper.
- 6.2 One of the critical success factors underpinning the Vision in the Business Plan is enabling people to take responsibility for their own mental and physical health and well-being, helping them to live active and healthy lives, while remaining safe within their homes and communities. To achieve this the service is not only focussing on the safety of food on offer in the district but is supporting wider public health objectives designed to tackle obesity by encouraging food businesses to offer healthy food options. The service has been working closely with the other Suffolk local authorities and the Health & Wellbeing Board on the Eat out Eat Well and, more recently, the Take out Eat Well healthier food award schemes.

7 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no new financial implications for the Council from the proposals within this year's Service Plan. Targets and service improvements will be met from budgets already approved for the delivery of the services in 2018/19.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Scrutiny Committee is being consulted on the Service Plan before consideration by Council at its meeting on 19 September 2018.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 The FSA Framework Agreement and HSE National Local Authority Enforcement Code set out in detail the requirements of local authority Food Safety and Health and Safety Service Plans and the framework and guidance has been used in the drafting of the Service Plan attached to this report. No other options were considered.

10 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 The Council is required under the FSA Framework Agreement and HSE National Local Authority Enforcement Code to approve a Food and Health and Safety Service Plan for 2018/19 and review its performance in 2017/18.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Notes the Food Safety and Health and Safety performance against the Service Plan for 2017/18, and
- b) Considers and comments on the Service Plan for 2018/19 prior to consideration by Council on 19 September 2018.

APPENDICES**Appendix A**

East Suffolk Food and Health and Safety Service Plan 2018/19

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Date	Available From
April 2010	FSA Framework Agreement http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/enforcement/frameworkagreementno5.pdf
May 2013	National Local Authority Enforcement Code http://www.hse.gov.uk/lau/publications/national-la-code.pdf