

TITLE OF REPORT: 2016 - 2017 Statutory Intervention Plan for the Food Control and Health & Safety services

REPORT OF: Paul Dowling, Strategic Director, Communities and Environment

Purpose of the Report

1. The report asks Cabinet to consider and recommend the Council to approve the Intervention Plan for the Food Control and Health & Safety services for 2016 - 2017.

Background

2. It is a statutory requirement that the Intervention Plans for these services are considered and approved on an annual basis.
3. The information required in the Health and Safety Service Intervention Plan is directed by the 'Section 18 Standard on Enforcement' of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
4. The information required in the Food Control Service Intervention Plan is directed by the requirements of the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Framework Agreement on Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities.
5. An Executive Summary of the Intervention Plan is attached at appendix 2. Full details of the Plan can be viewed online within the agenda folder for this meeting and hard copies are available in the Members' Room.

Proposal

6. It is proposed that the Intervention Plan for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 be approved.

Recommendations

7. It is recommended that Cabinet recommend the Council to approve the Intervention Plan for 2016 – 2017.

For the following reason:

To ensure that effective and appropriate enforcement strategies and sources are allocated to deliver the mandatory duties placed on the Council as the enforcing authority for the regulation of businesses.

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APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. The work of the Health and Safety Service is directly linked to the refreshed 'Vision 2030' Gateshead's Sustainable Community Strategy and to the Council Plan in particular through promoting and maintaining good standards of occupational health, safety and welfare within the workplace environment.
2. The work of the Food Control Service is directly linked to the refreshed 'Vision 2030' Gateshead's Sustainable Community Strategy in particular by ensuring the safety, hygiene and standards of food produced, supplied and consumed in Gateshead and by controlling food and water-borne illness. The service also gives help and advice to small business leading to sustainable economic growth of small business.

Background

3. Gateshead Council is an Enforcing Authority under both food safety and health & safety law and has mandatory, statutory responsibilities to enforce the relevant legislation.
4. The Government's National Priorities (as identified in the Rogers Review 2007) include:
 - 'Improving health in the workplace' because of 'the high risks posed to individuals, their families, business and the costs to the economy'
 - 'The hygiene of businesses selling, distributing and manufacturing food and the safety and fitness of food in the premises' because of the high impact in terms of numbers of deaths and ill health caused by unhygienic food businesses and the high costs to the economy
5. Development and Public Protection considers the Government's Better Regulation agenda when planning and delivering its services

Consultation

6. The Cabinet Members for Environment & Transport and Communities have been consulted.

Alternative Options

7. The Plan is based on delivery of the minimum interventions required to meet the statutory responsibilities placed on the Council using the resources currently allocated to the services.
8. Failure to deliver the minimum interventions is not an option.
9. Delivery of a more comprehensive Intervention Plan would require additional resources.

Implications of Recommended Option

10. Resources

- a. **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources, confirms that there are no additional financial implications arising from this report.
- b. **Human Resources Implications** - There are no human resource implications arising directly from this report.
- c. **Property Implications** - There are no property implications arising directly from this report

11. **Risk Management Implications** – Failure to deliver statutory responsibilities may result in government intervention.

12. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – An Equality Impact and Needs Assessment of these plans has indicated a neutral impact.

13. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

14. **Health Implications** - These statutory services have an important role in preventing ill health and harm and reducing health inequalities.

- The food service protects public health through the control of the spread of acute and chronic illness and by ensuring a safe, healthy and sustainable food chain.
- Enforcement of health and safety aims to prevent harm and ill health in the workplace. Tackling injuries and ill health at work benefits workers, businesses and society as a whole.

15. **Sustainability Implications** – There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

16. **Human Rights Implications** – There are no human resource implications arising directly from this report.

17. **Area and Ward Implications** - This report affects all wards equally

Background Information

- Section 18 'Standard on Enforcement', Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.
- Framework Agreement on Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities, Food Standards Agency

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite reduced resources the Environmental Health Team of the Council still responds to over 700 accidents, food poisonings and complaints and undertakes over 1300 interventions each year in a wide range of premises in order to build stronger, healthier, prosperous and sustainable businesses.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) as part of its national food safety framework agreement requires all Local Authorities to prepare a service plan which sets out how the official controls will be delivered.

The Health and Safety Code (The Code) requires Local Authorities to be transparent in their enforcement role. In order to achieve this we need to publish our intervention plan and report on our performance against that plan.

This plan sets out the overall aims of the Environmental Health Team and how the Council will deliver the food safety and health and safety enforcement functions in the financial year 2016/2017.

The plan describes the profile of businesses in the borough and the way in which this determines how the intervention programmes are planned.

It also describes the nature of service requests received and how they are managed and responded to within the service.

The resources allocated to deliver the service are set out for 2016/2017 and the ways in which business and customer satisfaction are monitored and maintained.

The plan includes a review of the work of the Environmental Health Team in 2015/2016 and the priorities and plans for the coming year. It includes details of the audit of the service carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office and the inter authority audit of the FHRS scheme operated in Gateshead.