



Northumberland

County Council

The Cabinet

Date: 10th September 2019

Food & Feed, Safety & Standards Service Plan 2019/20

Report of the Executive Director of Place: Paul Johnston

Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Resilience: Councillor John Riddle.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present to the Cabinet, for its consideration and endorsement, the Food and Feed, Safety and Standards Service Plan for 2019/20.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 1) Receive and adopt the Food and Feed, Safety and Standards Service Plan for 2019/20,

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is linked to the Living and Thriving parts of the Corporate Plan 2018-21 that have the objectives 'We want you to feel safe, healthy, and cared for' and 'We want to attract more and better jobs'.

Key Issues

1. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has produced a framework agreement on Local Authority food law enforcement. The framework sets out the FSA's expectations of Local Authorities in relation to the planning and delivery of food law enforcement.
2. The framework agreement requires Local Authorities to take account of the Government's better regulation agenda when planning, resourcing and delivering their services. This means that resources need to be targeted where they will be

most impactful and in the areas of highest risk in order to provide the public with an effective service.

3. The framework agreements requires that the Food and Feed Safety and Standards Service Plan 2019/20 (Appendix 1), which sets out the Council's 'Farm to Fork' approach to the safety & standards of the food chain and a review of performance against the previous 2018/19 plan:
 - To be approved at a relevant level with the Local Authority in order to ensure local transparency and accountability.
 - To be produced in a specific format
4. There are 5441 food & feed premises in Northumberland. They are risk assessed in accordance with prescribed schemes in both the food law and feed law codes of practice, which specify inspection intervals based on the risk category of the premises. The inspection programme is delivered by Public Protection within the Housing & Public Protection Service. The Plan shows the delivery structure and required staff resourcing.
5. The review of performance in 2018/19 has found that the Food Service plan was delivered with all service inspection targets either met or exceeded. 100% of high risk premises were completed. The targets for medium and low risk premises were all met fully or exceeded.
6. The percentage of food businesses in Northumberland with a food hygiene rating of satisfactory to very good (3 to 5 stars) is 97.8 % which continues to compare favourably with both the national average of 95.0 % and regional average of 96.5%.
7. The report contains both customer experience statistics and benchmarking results. The customer experience survey found that following food hygiene and food standards inspections with 98% of businesses either strongly agreed or agreed that they had received a high level of service.
8. A benchmarking process was carried out involving all of the seven North East councils and managed through the NE Food Liaison Group that is chaired by Northumberland. This showed that the number of food premises per officer was highest in Northumberland. Even so the Service achieved favourably comparable results for inspection rates of High, Medium, & Low risk premises.
9. As well as programmed inspections, Public Protection provides a reactive response to a wide variety of food safety, food standards & animal feed safety issues. These include complaints about food which does not meet legal standards or which is thought to have caused illness, or premises deemed to be unhygienic. Numerous requests are also made by new businesses for advice on food hygiene requirements and matters such as composition and labelling. Officers also work in partnership with Public Health England to investigate notifications of infectious disease outbreaks.
10. The Public Health Protection Unit continues to deliver the 'Produced in Northumberland' food source verification scheme. This voluntary food verification

scheme (that was launched in February 2016) covers any food manufacturer, retailer and caterer within Northumberland who applies and meets the requirements of the scheme. By the end of March 2019 the schemes membership had increased to 96 verified business members. Working in partnership with other Council teams the Public Protection also contributed to the promotion of the scheme. It was part of the It was regularly promoted at events in Northumberland including the County Show. At Hexham market on 12 September 2018 the scheme was show cased to HRH The Prince of Wales.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

Give the implications

Policy:	None
Finance and value for money:	Costs are given consideration in the plan. It is intended that performance management of plan delivery will increase the value for money provided. There are no new financial implications arising from this report. All costs for providing these services within the agreed service standards are included within the existing budget.
Human Resources:	Staff resourcing is identified in the plan.
Property:	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached)	The proposal contained in this report does not present potentially-significant equality issues.
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
Risk Assessment:	Adopting the plan will assist in providing a framework to ensure appropriate enforcement action is taken.
Crime & Disorder:	The adoption of the proposed plan will assist in ensuring the enforcement of statutory regulations.
Customer Considerations:	The plan would be delivered in such a way as to ensure that a consistent and proportionate approach is taken in all circumstances.
Carbon Reduction:	None
Consultation:	None
Wards:	All

Report sign off.

Authors must ensure that relevant officers and members have agreed the content of the report:

Finance Officer	Alan Mason
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	Annabel Scholes
Legal Services	Neil Masson
Monitoring Officer / Legal	Liam Henry
Human Resources	n/a
Procurement	n/a
I.T.	n/a
Relevant Executive Director	Paul Johnston
Chief Executive	Daljit Lally
Portfolio Holder(s)	John Riddle

Appendix 1

Food and Feed Safety and Standards Service Plan for 2018/19

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