

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

REPORT

SUBJECT: Food Safety Service Plan

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DATE: 19 August 2021

EXTN: 01903 737676

AREA: Technical Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) requires Councils to produce and publish an annual service plan, which includes establishing a work programme for the year.

The proposed Service Plan outlines Arun's food safety priorities for 2021/22, and is a commitment to meet the FSA's recovery expectations, including plans to reduce the backlog of inspections and return to service delivery in line with the Food Law Code of Practice at a faster pace, where possible.

The proposed Food Safety Service Plan for 2021/22 is attached and is recommended for adoption.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Food Safety Service Plan for 2021/22 is adopted.

1. BACKGROUND:

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) requires Councils to produce and publish an annual service plan, which includes establishing a work programme for the year.

During 2020/21 the food safety activity normally undertaken by Environmental Health was largely placed on hold due to pandemic, as it was necessary to deploy a significant proportion of staff resource to support COVID-19 work. The activity undertaken in 2020/21 was nonetheless in-line with pandemic service delivery guidance issued by the FSA and focused on high and medium priority matters, including, maintaining contact with high risk and non-compliant premises, responding to complaints and cases of food poisoning. This has however resulted in a significant backlog of inspections.

The FSA issued new guidance on 16 June 2021 outlining expectations for Local Authority

(LA) recovery from 1 July 2021 to the end 2023, which replaces the usual food safety intervention arrangements. In 2021/22 LAs are expected to prioritise interventions of new businesses and ensure all A-rated (high risk) premises receive on-site inspection.

An application for grant funding has been made to the FSA (£3,734) to assist with triage and prioritisation of 207 new food businesses.

The proposed Service Plan outlines Arun's food safety priorities for 2021/22 and is a commitment to meet the FSA's recovery expectations, including plans to reduce the backlog of inspections at a faster pace, where possible.

In 2021/22 it is planned to complete inspection of all A rated (high-risk) premises and all 207 newly registered businesses, and in addition all B rated premises, non-compliant C and non-complaint D rated premises. We will also maintain contact with our approved premises. These are premises which manufacture or wholesale food of animal origin.

Further, as resources permit, we will target inspection of the remaining C rated (medium risk) premises.

Funding from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) has provided additional resource dedicated to food safety to assist in this regard, however it is noted that resources usually dedicated to food safety are currently still invested in supporting COVID-19 work.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

That the Food Safety Service Plan for 2021/22 is adopted.

3. OPTIONS:

1. Amend and adopt the food safety service plan.
2. Do not adopt the food safety service plan.

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		X
Relevant District Ward Councillors		X
Other groups/persons (please specify)		X

5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)

	YES	NO
Financial	X	
Legal	X	
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment	X	
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act	X	
Sustainability		X

Asset Management/Property/Land		X
Technology		X
Other (please explain)		

6. IMPLICATIONS:

The Council has a legal duty to publish a food safety service plan. Adopting and delivering the Food Safety Service Plan will ensure that Arun District Council achieves the service delivery expectations of the FSA and protects the public by ensuring food safety across the district.

Delivery of this plan can be met within existing current budgets, including maintaining additional resources currently funded through COMF.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To ensure there is an approved and published food safety service plan, directing the food safety work of the Council, and in particular appropriate arrangements in place for recovery of the service due to COVID impacts.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Food Safety Service Plan 2021/22

Appendix B Food Safety Service Standards - September 2021

Equality Impact Assessment Food Service Plan