



Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

Executive Board

Date: 16th May 2007

Subject: FOOD AND HEALTH TEAM SERVICE PLAN 2007/8

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In
(Details contained in the report)

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the Food and Health Team Service Plan 2007/8 for submission to full Council in June 2007

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In December 2005, the 'Food Safety Service Strategy' was presented to Health Scrutiny Board for comment and this included a local target of inspections of food premises of 50%. The report made clear that this did not meet the expectations of the Food Standards Agency. Scrutiny were informed that this lower target was to allow a wider range of food and health issues to be addressed and the draft Food Strategy for Leeds was reported to Scrutiny at the same meeting, to show the potential for this. The reports were also presented to Executive Board in March 2006.
- 2.2 The Authority was audited by the Food Standards Agency in 2006. The Food Standards Agency monitor Local Authority compliance with the Food Safety Act Codes of Practice, which set out the frequency of inspections of food premises, based on the perceived risk to the public. The two main issues raised by the audit were the number of inspections carried out and the quality of the database used to record commercial premises details, which is used to map out the programme of inspections conducted each year.

- 2.3 Work has been ongoing to implement the audit recommendations since September 2006. The most recent report to Scrutiny Board (Health & Adult Social Care) provided an update on progress with this work was presented in March 2007. Scrutiny Board was advised that the action plan implementation was almost complete and that good progress had been made since the audit in 2006.
- 2.4 The planning of the service into 2007/08 has taken account of the findings of the audit and, we believe, ensures compliance with the Framework Agreement between the Food Standards Agency and Local Authorities. The Service Plan 2007/08 is summarised later, for Executive Board approval.
- 2.5 The Food Standards Agency have recently consulted Local Authorities on changes to the way food safety services will be monitored in future. It is intended to move away from checking the number of inspections completed, to monitoring food safety law compliance amongst businesses in a Local Authority area. This will refocus food safety services in England on the outcomes of their activities, rather than merely counting how many inspections have been completed. This change in approach is welcomed locally. The changes will be introduced formally from April 2008 and the Food Standards Agency have accepted that 2007/08 will be a transitional year. The 2007/08 Service Plan has been written to see the Authority through that period in a way that complies with the current Framework Agreement, whilst preparing for the fundamental change from April 2008.

3.0 FOOD AND HEALTH SERVICE PLAN 2007/08.

3.1 The Food and Health Team Service Plan 2007/8 was considered by Scrutiny Board (Health and Adult Social Care) at its meeting in March 2007 and endorsed for submission to the Council's Executive Board.

3.2 A summary of the Food and Health Team Service Plan 2007/8 is shown below, however a full copy is available to view on the Intranet at *Neighbourhoods and Housing, Reference Documents*.

3.3 Summary of Food and Health Service Plan 2007/2008

The Food and Health Service Plan sets down the objectives, scope, current demands and priorities, service delivery issues, and the resources and performance requirements of delivering the Leeds Food and Health Service.

3.3.1 The Objectives of the plan include:

- Enforcement of legislation in relation to the inspection of food, food businesses and food animals.
- Improving the understanding of food businesses and their employees in the means of preventing risks to health.
- Improving the awareness of the public to prevent food-borne illness in the home environment.
- Monitoring the state of food and water consumed and/or produced in Leeds by sampling and the investigation of infectious disease notifications.
- Investigation of complaints and requests for service received from the public.
- Making adequate arrangements to deal with unpredicted or emergency situations that may cause risks to health from food-borne illness.

3.3.2 The Scope of the plan includes:

- Proactive food safety inspections.

- Alternative Enforcement Strategy for lower risk premises.
- Investigation of communicable diseases, including outbreaks.
- Investigation of food complaints.
- Implementation of Food Standards Agency Food Alert Scheme.
- Investigation of poor hygiene complaints.
- Food sampling, including national and regional surveys.
- Examination of food, including the seizure, detention and voluntary surrender of food.
- Examination of imported and exported food including appropriate certification.
- Liaison with other local authorities regarding food manufactured within Leeds City Area
- Liaison with other West Yorkshire local authorities including Trading Standards.
- Advice to business including the issue twice yearly of an advice newsletter "Food for Thought" sent to around 3000 food businesses.
- Annual delivery of Leeds Applied Food Microbiology Course providing training to environmental health staff and associated professionals
- Operation of a Scores on the Doors Scheme (from June 07).
- Promotion of food safety e.g. Food Safety Week.
- Animal Health Service in relation to disease control of food animals within the Authority area.

3.3.3 Current Demands and Priorities

One of the demands on the service is to meet the Food Standards Agency expectations in terms of the Framework Agreement and the food premises inspection regime following the audit in 2006.

Food premises are assigned a risk category according to a range of criteria that includes the number and vulnerability of consumers served, the inherent risk of the process undertaken and the confidence in the management of the business. The profile of food premises in Leeds as at 14th February 2007 was as follows:

<u>Premises Category</u>	<u>Number</u>
Category A-C High to Medium risk premises	3005 (44.5%)
Category D-F Medium to Low risk premises	1752 (25.9%)
Category Unrated (on system awaiting inspection)	431 (6.3%)
Premises not included in the inspection programme in accordance with the framework agreement and code of practice (includes very low risk e.g. milkmen & child minders)	1563 (23%)

It is planned to undertake a total of approximately **2884** programmed high risk premises inspections for 2007/8. It is estimated that approximately **630** hygiene complaints and **240** food complaints will be received over the year. The team will also undertake a number of targeted inspections and interventions which support the wider aspects of health and the corporate focus of working in defined areas of deprivation across the city. Other demands include sampling of foods investigation of outbreaks (estimated **30**) and food related infectious disease (estimated notifications **1200**), food safety (estimated **60**) and food poisoning incidents.

The food and Health Team also undertake other activities inc liaising with other organisations and authorities, food education and dealing with imported food.

3.3.4 Resources

The estimated net cost of the service for 2007/8 is £706,660. In real terms this is an increase of approximately £100,000 on last years budget due to the need to meet the FSA audit requirements to inspect 100% of all high risk premises.

3.3.5 Performance

Target Response times (working days) to food service requests have been set as follows:-

- Food poisoning cases 1 day
- Food complaints 5 days
- Food hygiene complaints 5 days
- Food hazard warning 1 days
- Requests for advice 5 days
- Export certificates 5 days
- Home/originating authority liaison 5 days

4.00 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.01 It is recommended that the 2007/08 Food and Health Service Plan be approved by Executive Board for submission to full Council as part of the Council's budget and policy framework.