

Scrutiny Committee on the Environment 5th November 2012

Informal Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Food Service Plan 2012/2013

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee on progress with the activities detailed in the Directorate of the Urban Environment Food Service Plan 2012/2013.

Background

2. Local authorities are required by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to produce and implement an annual Food Service Plan that sets out how the authority will deliver food law enforcement functions to ensure that national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally.
3. The Food Service is located within the Planning and Environmental Health Division of the Directorate of the Urban Environment and provided by officers within the Food and Occupational Safety (FOS) and Trading Standards sections.
4. The service positively contributes to improved public health and consists of inspections of food businesses to ensure compliance with food safety and food standards legislation, investigation of complaints relating to food and premises, sampling of foods for microbiological and compositional requirements, the investigation of food borne disease as well as educational and promotional activities.
5. By ensuring the safety of food produced and consumed within the borough and encouraging healthy eating and reducing health inequalities, the delivery of the food enforcement service contributes to the Jobs and Prosperity theme and the Health and Well-being theme of the Council Plan and the Dudley Community Strategy. The service helps maintain public confidence in the standards of our local food industry and provides practical support to businesses in difficult economic times, which helps to ensure fair competition and allow well run food businesses to flourish and contribute to the local economy.
6. The current year's Food Service Plan was brought to the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 14th June 2012 and subsequently endorsed by Cabinet on 19th September 2012 prior to being sent to Full Council in October 2012

7. A summary of the activities in the Food Service Plan 2012-13 completed at the half-year stage is contained in Appendix 1 of this report. However, items of note include:

- High levels of high risk food premises inspections in accordance with the planned programme have been carried out.
- The increase in the proportion of the borough's food premises which are broadly compliant with food hygiene and safety legislation is being sustained, up from 75% in April 2008 to 89% in September 2012.
- The proportion of Dudley food premises achieving the two highest ratings of 5* (excellent) and 4* (very good) is now 50% (925 premises), up a further 5% since the same period in 2011-12.
- The zero star strategy programme, to improve standards over a short period of time in poorly performing premises, is continuing and has resulted in a reduction of 40% in zero star premises in 12 months.
- The publishing of the results of food hygiene inspections on the Council's website under the "Scores on the Doors" scheme is continuing along with publication of the Dudley Food for Health Awards.
- A project to migrate the Dudley Scores on the Doors scheme to the new national food hygiene rating scheme is underway, assisted by grant funding from the Food Standards Agency. This will ensure consistency in the rating of businesses across the country and enable Dudley consumers to access information on ratings anywhere in the country through the website.
- High levels of microbiological and compositional sampling have been maintained.

Finance

8. Financial implications from implementing the Food Service Plan are met from within existing budgets.

Law

9. The Council's duties with respect to protecting consumer interests in relation to food safety and standards are set out under the Food Safety Act 1990.

10. Powers to enable the Food Standards Agency to monitor and audit local authorities are contained in the Food Standards Act 1999.

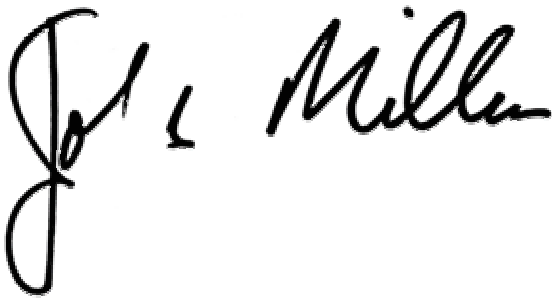
Equality Impact

11. The proposals in this report do not impact on relevant groups or conflict with the Council's commitment to equality. Account is taken of the diversity of the ethnic origins of the local food business proprietors and efforts made to assist those whose first language is not English, for example by providing interpreters to accompany inspectors where possible and by providing advice literature in a range of languages.

12. The Food Service Plan contributes towards improving health, reducing health inequalities for all residents in the borough by promoting healthy eating. In particular, healthy eating is encouraged for children and young persons and also elderly people through the Dudley Food for Health Award. The vast majority of premises achieving the award are schools, nurseries and residential care homes.

Recommendation

13. It is recommended that progress with the delivery of service within the Food Service Plan 2012-13 at the half-year stage be noted by members.



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List of Background Papers

Food Service Plan 2012/2013

APPENDIX 1

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2012/2013 **Progress up to 30th September 2012**

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>HALF YEAR TARGET</u>	<u>ACHIEVED</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
High risk food safety inspections (Cat A, B, C)	100% (425)	94% (400)	The 100% target is programmed to be achieved by year-end.
Low risk food safety inspections (Cat D)	80% (306)	46% (142)	Under achievement due to an increase in non food related reactive work in relation to commercial premises and a reduced capacity to deliver. The 80% target is expected to be met by the year end.
Carry out re-visits to food premises following programmed inspection	Approx 100	93	Re-visits are carried out where urgent remedial work has been required or Improvement Notices served (mainly 1* and no star premises).
Continue to publish the results of food hygiene & safety inspections on the Council's website. "Scores on the Doors" scheme	Monthly updates to website of all inspections undertaken.	Achieved	1859 premises are now listed in the following categories: 5* (excellent): 465 premises (25%) 4* (very good): 460 premises (25%) 3* (good): 589 premises (31.5%) 2* (broadly compliant): 207 premises (11%) 1* (poor): 110 premises (6%) no stars (very poor): 28 premises (1.5%)
Migrate Dudley Scores on the Doors scheme to the new national food hygiene rating scheme	By March 2013	Project in progress- new scheme to be launched in final quarter	Migration to the national scheme will ensure that all food businesses are scored in a consistent way across the country and that Dudley consumers will be able to access information on ratings across local authority boundaries. The cost of this work is being funded by the Food Standards Agency.
Utilise the alternative interventions strategy in the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Code of Practice to give	Continue to implement Interventions Strategy	Achieved	High star premises may receive a themed or partial inspection focussing on elements which can be improved from last inspection (unless new food business

<u>ACTION</u>	HALF YEAR TARGET	ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
greater focus on improving standards in the poorest performing food businesses			operator when full inspection is carried out). This releases additional officer time to work more closely with high risk no star premises to improve standards over a short period of time. This resulted in a 40% reduction in zero star premises in 12 months.
Continue to support food business operators to produce documented food safety management systems (FSMS).	On all inspections	Covered on all inspections. Pack has been developed to assist low risk businesses not covered by the FSA's "Safer Food, Better Business" system	Previous funding from the FSA to deliver bespoke training to small businesses through seminars and on site coaching has ceased; hence additional time needs to be taken during inspections to assist proprietors to comply.
Increase the proportion of food premises broadly compliant with food hygiene legislation (2* or higher)	88%	89%	There has been a rise in broadly compliant premises from 75% to 89% since the "Scores on the Doors" scheme was launched in April 2008. Broadly compliant figure incorporates all food premises in the borough, including newly registered premises which are counted as not compliant until inspected.
Continue surveillance for new premises which require registration and inspection.	Carry out exercise to identify unregistered food businesses	This activity is on going throughout the year.	During the half year, 191 food premises registrations have been dealt with. Most of these are existing food businesses which have changed proprietors. The number of small food businesses changing hands and requiring re-registration and inspection has steadily increased over the past 3 years due to the current economic climate. There has also been an increase in new home caterers. This places an extra pressure on the inspection programme in terms of additional inspections and providing extra support to new

<u>ACTION</u>	HALF YEAR TARGET	ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
			proprietors.
High risk food standards inspections	100% (6)	100% (6)	
Medium risk food standards inspections	50% of due medium (91)	92% (84)	The 100% target is programmed to be achieved by year-end.
Microbiological food samples	204	204 (100%)	Final outturn expected to be 312 samples for the year.
Compositional food samples	50	27 (54%)	Year end figure expected to be 100 samples. Budget dependent.
Deliver food standards projects- compositional & labelling	<p>Contribute to the following Centsa (Central England Trading Standards Authorities) Projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gluten / Allergen claims non prepacked • Counterfeit Spirit Drink 	<p>Sampling undertaken & results awaited</p> <p>Spirit drink project resulted in removal of stock being non UK duty paid.</p>	
Food complaints (FOS)	Approx 50	28 received	Complaints relate to foreign bodies, microbiological or chemical contamination.
Food complaints (Trading Standards)	Approx 60	66 received	Complaints concerning dates, labelling and quality and suspect food fraud.
Food premises complaints (FOS)	Approx. 100	95 received	
Food advice enquiries (FOS)	Approx 125	171 received	Includes advice requests from businesses and members of the public.
Food borne disease notifications	Approx. 300	421 received including 284 campylobacter notifications	Campylobacter notifications dealt with by postal advice. All others require officer visit/contact.
Dudley Food for Health Awards Issued	50 awards	22 awards given. (17 Gold, 4 Silver, 1	Delivered in conjunction with NHS Dudley. Award encourages premises to

<u>ACTION</u>	HALF YEAR TARGET	ACHIEVED	COMMENTS
		Bronze Awards).	promote healthy eating whilst complying with food hygiene regulations. Vacant food for health advisor post at NHS Dudley has now been filled; hence it is expected that performance on this target will improve.
Prosecutions concluded	-	1	All prosecutions are progressed in accordance with the Enforcement Policy and are published on the Council's website. A further 5 prosecution cases in relation to food hygiene cases are currently being progressed.