
Select Committee on the Environment 12th November 2007

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Food Service Plan 2007/2008

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee on progress with the activities detailed in the Directorate of the Urban Environment Food Service Plan 2007/2008.

Background

2. Local authorities are required by the Food Standards Agency 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 Development and Environmental Protection 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 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. Delivery of the service contributes to the Council Plan themes of Safety, Environment, Caring and Quality Service Matters. The Community Strategy themes of creating a prosperous borough, promoting well-being and good health and safeguarding the environment are contributed to by ensuring the safety of food produced and consumed within the borough, encouraging healthy eating and reducing health inequalities.
6. The current year's Food Service Plan was brought to the Select Committee on the Environment on 26th June 2007.
7. A summary of the activities in the Food Service Plan 2007-08 completed at the half-year stage is contained in Appendix 1 of this report. However, items of note include:
 - Continuing delivery of the Dudley Food for Health Awards with 24 Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze and Takeaway Awards being made.
 - National Food Safety Week in June was participated in with a hand

- washing and food hygiene event for visitors to Russells Hall Hospital.
- High levels of microbiological and compositional sampling have been maintained
- The project to deliver a publication scheme showing the results of food hygiene inspections on the Council's website (commonly known as "Scores on the Doors") is actively being considered
- A prosecution case against a multinational company, McDonalds, for an offence of selling a meal containing a metal bolt was concluded in September 2007 which resulted in a fine of £13,500 with full costs of £3,500 being awarded to the Council. This was the first successful prosecution by any local authority against McDonalds in 7 years.
- As a result of requests received from junior schools, food labelling lessons have been redesigned to suit the needs of year 5/6 year pupils. These have proved popular.

8. At the half year stage there is some under achievement on high risk food safety and standards inspections and on low risk food safety inspections. This has been due to a number of factors including a high level of reactive work and the requirement to carry out smoke free compliance inspections at all premises visited since 1st July 2007. It is expected however that the 100% targets will be delivered by the year end.

Finance

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

Law

10. 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.

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

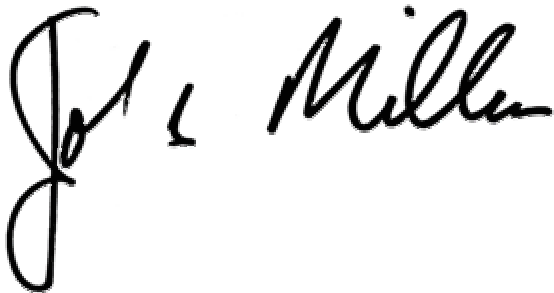
Equality Impact

12. 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 necessary and by providing advice literature in a range of languages.

13. The Food Service Plan contributes towards 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

14. It is recommended that progress with the delivery of service within the Food Service Plan 2007-08 at the half-year stage be noted by members.



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List of Background Papers

Food Service Plan 2007/2008

APPENDIX 1

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2007/2008

Progress up to 30th September 2007

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	<u>ACHIEVED</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
High risk food safety inspections	100% (579) End of Year Target	79% (456)	The high level of reactive work, including investigating food poisoning outbreaks and carrying out noise investigations, has impacted on inspection work. Additionally, since July 2007, a smoke free compliance check is carried out at all premises visited for food hygiene inspection. The 100% target is programmed to be achieved by year-end.
High risk food standards inspections	100% (26) End of Year Target	81% (21)	It is expected that the 100% target will be achieved by the year end.
To assist businesses to comply with the legal requirement to produce a documented food safety management system (Safer Food, Better Business) (SFBB)	1. To visit and evaluate compliance for all businesses who attended free Food Standards Agency (FSA) funded training from Oct 2006 to March 2007. 2. To provide training to further businesses on request and payment of £100 fee	Follow up visits to all businesses assisted through the second tranche project of the FSA funded scheme is on-going. Only a handful of food businesses have expressed interest in this training; hence there are insufficient numbers to run a further course	Final evaluation report on the second tranche project to be submitted to the FSA in December 2007. Food businesses are also advised of alternative sources of this training available commercially.

Microbiological food samples	250	254	Due to increased laboratory costs for microbiological analysis, final out turn for the year likely to be 460 samples, not 500.
Compositional food samples	100	158	Includes involvement in regional sampling projects (CentTSA)
Food complaints (FOS)	Approx 100	86 received	Complaints relate to foreign bodies, microbiological or chemical contamination.
Food complaints (Trading Standards)	Approx 61	74 received	Most complaints relate to out of date foods
Food premises complaints (FOS)	Approx. 75	77 received	
Food advice enquiries (FOS)	Approx 100	101 received	Includes advice requests from businesses and members of the public.
Food Alerts	Action all received as appropriate	21 received	All alerts are appropriately actioned; this may involve contacting food businesses and/or issue of press releases.
Food borne disease notifications	Approx. 300	255 received including 153 campylobacter notifications	Campylobacter notifications dealt with by postal advice. All others require officer visit/contact.
Dudley Food for Health Awards Issued	Local Area Agreement target (LAA) is 55 Awards for the year	24 awards given (1 Platinum, 13 Gold, 7 Silver, 1 Bronze, 2 Takeaway Awards)	Delivered in conjunction with PCT partners. Award encourages premises to promote healthy eating whilst complying with food hygiene regulations. At half year stage, achievement is slightly under target; however 7 awards pending in October 2007.

Educational and promotional work undertaken	Contribute to National Food Safety Week Deliver food labelling lessons to year 11 pupils	Hand washing and food hygiene event held for visitors to Russells Hall Hospital in June 2007. 7 lessons have been delivered. Lessons redesigned to be suitable for year 5/6 pupils. 4 lessons delivered	These lessons are a key action of the Dudley Food for Health Action Plan. As a follow up, new lessons covering issues such as healthy eating are being designed.
Investigate options for delivering a scheme to publish the results of food hygiene inspections.	By 1 st April 2008	Project team set up and various options being considered.	Prepared decision on preferred option to be made within 2007/2008
Prosecutions/formal cautions concluded	-	1	Prosecution for sale of meal containing a metal bolt resulted in fine of £13,500 and £3,500 costs. A further food hygiene contraventions case is currently being considered for prosecution.