

## **Food Safety Plan – Principal Environmental Health Officer – Daniel Bradding**

### **Synopsis of report:**

**The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval of the proposed Food Service Plan for 2023/24**

### **Recommendation:**

**The Food Service Plan for 2023/24 as attached at Appendix A is approved.**

## **1. Context and background of report**

- 1.1 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has produced a framework agreement on local authority food law enforcement. One part of that agreement contains service planning guidance. This ensures that key areas of enforcement covered by the Food Law Enforcement Standard are included within local Food Service Plans, whilst allowing scope for flexibility and the inclusion of any locally defined objectives. The requirement to produce a local Food Service Plan came into effect on 1 April 2001.
- 1.2 The Food Standards Agency requires a Local Authority's proposed service plans to be submitted to the relevant Member forum (which is this Committee) for approval to ensure local transparency and accountability.

## **2. Report and, where applicable, options considered and recommended**

- 2.1 The proposed Plan for 2023/24, attached at Appendix 'A', will satisfy the requirements of the Food Standards Agency. Members are made aware that the FSA suspended the national food safety inspection programme in 2020 during the initial stages of the Covid pandemic and further suspensions followed.
- 2.2 Moving on from the challenges of 2020-2022, the team has been working on a quarterly programme of interventions that has provided a route to recovery by the end of the 2022-2023 period such that our position is now fully recovered. Routine and reactive microbiological sampling of both poorly compliant premises and contributing to national sampling programmes resumed in 2022-23 and this will continue into 2023-24
- 2.3 It is of note that organisational improvements to general software have led to the service developing in-house digital forms for official controls. In 22/23 this resulted in greater data insights from inspections and will continue in 23/24.

## **3. Policy framework implications**

- 3.1 In relation to the Council's Corporate Business Plan (2022-2026) the Food Service Plan is a key driver in achieving the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and supports the Economic Development Strategy. An effective food safety service contributes to the above priorities in protecting the health of its residents and visitors through the provision of safe food outlets, the prevention and detection of food borne illness and

food poisoning and ensuring good businesses are not being disadvantaged by non-compliant traders.

**4. Resource implications/Value for Money**

4.1 There are no resource implications

**5. Legal implications**

5.1 The production of a local Food Service Plan is a matter of following Agency guidance best practice, rather than statutory compliance. Service plans provide the basis on which local authorities are monitored and audited by the Agency under The Food Standards Act 1999 and Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations.

5.2 The Council has a statutory duty to enforce legislation relating to food. The Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice (England) March 2021 details the minimum training and qualification requirements for officers authorised by Food Authorities to undertake food enforcement work. Food Authorities that do not have regard to relevant provisions of this Code may find their decisions or actions successfully challenged, and evidence gathered during a criminal investigation being ruled inadmissible by a court.

**6. Equality implications**

6.1 None

**7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

7.1 None

**8. Conclusions**

**(To resolve)**

**Background papers**

FSA Food Law Code of Practice (England) March 2021  
<https://smartercommunications.food.gov.uk/connect/UXYpkuExoT>