

REPORT FOR: **CABINET**

Date of Meeting:	15 July 2010
Subject:	Food Safety Plan 2010/11
Key Decision:	Yes
Responsible Officer:	John Edwards, Divisional Director Environmental Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Phillip O'Dell, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Enclosures:	Food Service Plan 2010/11

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

Recommendations:

Cabinet is being asked to consider and approve the Food Safety Service Plan for 2010/11. The Plan is drawn up in accordance with the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement.

Reason: (For recommendation)

By virtue of the requirements contained in the Food Standards Act 1999 and the National Food Framework Agreement (FA), issued by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) the Council is mandated to produce and approve an annual

food service plan. Failure to produce **and** approve a plan at “Member Forum” Level would be contrary to statutory requirements and may lead to enforcement action against the Council by the FSA.

Section 2 – Report

2.1 Brief Background

- 2.1.1. Harrow Council is committed through its food safety team to ensure that food and drink intended for sale for human consumption, which is produced, stored, distributed or handled within the London Borough of Harrow (the ‘Council’) is without risk to public health or consumer safety.
- 2.1.2. The Council has statutory duties under Food Safety legislation for providing a food inspection and enforcement service. The Food Standards Agency monitors the Councils enforcement activities and requires approval of the service plans by elected members
- 2.1.3 This Service Plan is drafted in the format required by the Food Standards Agency and in accordance with the guidance contained in the Framework Agreement and includes: the service provided, service standards and performance, targets and special projects for the past and coming year together with a statement of variances against the previous years plan.
- 2.14 The Councils food service plan has a direct or indirect impact on the following National Indicators:

NI 182: Satisfaction of business with local authority regulation services

NI 183: Impact of local authority trading standard services on the fair trading environment

NI 184: Food establishments in the area, which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law

NI 6: participation in regular volunteering (Harrow LAA)

- Delivering food safety training courses for volunteers working for charitable organizations
- Delivering food safety training to children and adults in care

NI 55: Obesity in primary school age children in reception

NI 56: Obesity in primary school age children in year 6

- Inspections of schools to ensure food hygiene and nutritional labeling requirements are being met
- Provision of healthy eating information to schools and suppliers
- Promotion of healthy eating to residents and businesses

NI 120: All-age all cause mortality rate

NI 121: Mortality rate from all circulatory diseases at ages under 75

NI 124: People with a long-term condition supported to be independent and in control of their condition

- Ensuring imported and domestically produced food is safe and compliant with UK Law
- Promoting greater understanding of food labeling so that consumers are able to choose healthier options
- Helping to prevent food incidents and so increase consumer confidence in food
- Targeting food sampling activities to highlight the saturated fat, sugar and salt content of foods

NI 136: People supported to live independently through social services

NI 139: The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently

NI 141: Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living

NI 142: Percentage of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living

- Promoting how to avoid food poisoning through the provision of practical advice to care homes
- Promotion of the understanding of food labels, especially durability dates
- Training of residents in food hygiene

NI 171: New business registration rate

- Promoting the registration of all food businesses within the Borough

NI 172: Percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth

- supporting food businesses with start up support and advice, legal compliance advice and guidance, training programmes and information on ways to seek business help

NI 191: Residual household waste per household

- Promotion and understanding of food labels, especially use-by and best before dates, helping reduce the amount of waste food being discarded through the household waste stream
- Promotion of recycling / Reducing Packaging in the food business sector (Contributing to Harrows Target of 227kg per person in 2010/2011)

3.1 Options considered

There is no other option for consideration. The requirement to produce and approve a food safety plan is contained in the National Food Framework Agreement and associated guidance.

4.1 Current situation

4.1.1 This is a continuation of current practice.

5.1 Why a change is needed

5.1.1 No change is required to current practice.

4.1 Resources, costs and risks

4.1.1 The past 4 years have seen a reduction in the number of officers by approximately of 20% of establishment. The team has an establishment of 6 fte.

4.1.2 The non statutory functions include: investigation of food poisonings / infectious diseases, investigation of food complaints/food hygiene complaints, delivery of the sampling plan or other reactive aspects of the service or contributions to the Councils activities such as Weeks of Action. Based on this, the statutory programme will be met in 20010/11 but resources will be concentrated on the highest risk inspection.

5.1 Staffing and workforce

5.1.1 The food team is fully staffed in accordance with the service establishment.

6.1 Equalities Impact considerations

- 6.1.1 A separate and independent equalities impact assessment has not been commissioned for this report. It should be noted that all our statutory duties are undertaken in accordance with a national risk-rating regime, which considers only those factors considered appropriate to food safety.

7.1 Financial Implications

- 7.1.1 There is no request in this report for additional finances. However, delivery will be closely monitored and any significant evidence indicating failure to deliver statutory duties will be reported initially to the Director of Community and Environment Services for appropriate action. At this stage it is not envisaged that there will be any significant implications to the current budget or the Medium Term Budget Strategy.

8.1 Performance Issues

- 8.1.1 The policy does not impact on any of the Councils LAA targets but we are required to report on the following National Indicators
- NI 182, Satisfaction of business with regulatory services. There is no national target for this indicator, although local benchmark groups are steadily becoming established. Harrow Councils performance for 2008/9 was 70%. Our target for 2010/11 is for 75%
 - NI 184, Food establishments broadly compliant with food hygiene law (food safety). The national target for this indicator is 75%. Harrow Councils performance for 2008/9 was 75.1%. Our target for 2009/10 is 76%
- 8.1.2 The food safety service is subject to random auditing by the FSA. Failure to demonstrate compliance with the spirit of the Framework Agreement would result in adverse reporting. An extreme sanction would be for the FSA to remove the Councils food safety powers.
- 8.1.3 In the event that this plan is not approved, it is likely, in the first instance, the FSA would instruct the Council to reconsider the matter with a view to approving an appropriate plan.

9.1 Environmental Impact

- 9.1.1 Approving this food safety plan does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment. The policy does not have any direct effect on

the wider environment. There is an indirect positive effect through NI 191, which is noted in paragraph 2.1.4 above.

10.1 Risk Implications

10.1.1 This policy is not required to be included on the Directorate or any other corporate risk register

11.1 Corporate Priorities

11.1.1 The Council's three priorities are detailed in the Year Ahead Statement 2009/10. The Food Service Plan links with these, in particular Building Stronger Communities through changing the culture of food businesses in terms of hygiene, standards and health promotion. The food team contributes to a range of corporate activities designed to enhance cultural exclusivity including Under One Sky, Pinner fair, and the annual French and German markets. There are also links to Better Streets; food businesses produce significant amounts of commercial waste. Inappropriate storage and disposal of this waste has a negative visual impact on the environment and the perceptions people have of their locality. The food team works very closely with all traders to ensure they have appropriate commercial waste storage and disposal arrangements.

The food safety team is linked to the key themes of Harrows Local Area Agreements including health & wellbeing educating people and driving up knowledge to build safer and stronger communities. The team is involved in projects to provide basic food safety training and education to young people with learning difficulties. Resources permitting, there is a strong desire amongst our staff to increase our efforts in the Health and Wellbeing agenda to help drive down childhood obesity by providing better understanding around food quality and food labelling.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Kanti Hirani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 16 June 2010		
Name: Yagazie Nwaigwe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 23 June 2010		

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: David Harrington

on behalf of the
Divisional Director
Partnership,
Development and
Performance

Date: 17 June 2010

Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: Andrew Baker

on behalf of the
Divisional Director
(Environmental
Services)

Date: 15 June 2010

Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Taiq Chowdry, Services Manager, Community Safety Service

Tel: 020 8736 6236

Background Papers: None

**Call-In Waived by the
Chairman of Overview
and Scrutiny
Committee**

NOT APPLICABLE

*(for completion by Democratic
Services staff only)*