

Portfolio Holder decision record sheet

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| Name of decision maker: | Councillor Robin Bromham |
| Portfolio: | Neighbourhood Operations |
| Date of Portfolio Holder decision: | 29/12/2023 |

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| Title of decision | Food Service Plan |
| Part II: | N/A |
| Part II reason: | |

Decision made and reasons

That the Food Safety Plan as annexed to this report be approved.

The reasons for this decision are set out in the background to this report.

Background to report:

The Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities is issued by the Food Standard Agency and provides the framework to implement the Food Standards Agency powers under the Food Standards Act and to influence and oversee local authority enforcement activity.

The framework also requires that the Food Service Plan be suitably approved, whether this is by Senior Officers or by members.

The Service Plan being discussed is the way in which we ensure that we meet the framework requirements and allocate resources dedicated to the food law enforcement functions undertaken by the Environmental Health Service.

The food service plan follows the Food Standards Agency recovery plan objectives and also includes details of progress made against the plan in 2022/23.

The role of the Council and Environmental Health changed significantly during 2020/2021, 2021/2022 and continued into 2022/2023. Priority was given to local contact tracing, investigation of workplace outbreaks of COVID-19 and following up on COVID -19 complaints. These priorities changed slightly in early 2022 in line with government guidance. Resources from the team that were diverted to reducing the spread of COVID -19 have now been returned to the team.

The Council have and followed the COVID 19 Local Authority Recovery guidance issued by the FSA throughout the pandemic and have prioritised business as normal activities in line with this guidance and focused on the risk to public health for example inspecting high risk food premises as a priority. This guidance covers the period from 1 July 2021 to 2023/24. This has now been revoked and the service is now working in line with Practice Guidance and the Food Law Code of Practice.

There is still a small level of uncertainty at this current time due to the ongoing impact of Covid 19. This may require that objectives change throughout the year, however the general trend for the food team is moving back to a more business as usual approach to the delivery of food controls where previously the focus was on recovery.

We exceeded the time frames for the objectives within the recovery plan. Therefore we request that the Food Service Plan is now approved.

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Reports considered: (here reference can be made to specific documents)
Food Service Plan Appendix 1

Officers/Councillors/Ward Councillors/Stakeholders consulted:
Rebecca Connolly
Sarah Stefano
Emma Walker
Stefania Horne
Members of Corporate Leadership Team

Deputy Monitoring Officer comments: No further comments to add to the report

Deputy s151 Officer comments: No further comments to add to the report.

Implications: Plan sets out how the food service will meet its statutory obligations

Risk: Risk of not meeting statutory obligation can be the Food Standard Agency taking over the operation of the service.

Value for money /financial implications:

There is resource provision within service budgets for staff and legal costs associated with the work of the Food, Health and Safety Team. This covers the delivery of the Food Safety Plan, amongst other duties.

Options considered and reasons for rejection:

The options to run the service are either run the service in house and follow the framework agreement or risk the service being taken over by the Food Standards Agency, at a cost to the Council.

Portfolio Holder's signature:

Date: 15th December 2023

Details of any interests declared and any dispensations given by the Standards Committee:

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Date decision record sheet received from portfolio holder: 15/12/23

Date decision published: 29/12/2023

Decision no: PH-029-23

Date of expiry of call-in period: 08/01/24

Date any call-in received or decision implemented: