



FULL COUNCIL

Wednesday, 24 November 2021

Subject	East Suffolk Council Food and Health and Safety Service Plan 2021-2023
Report by	Councillor Mary Rudd Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health
Supporting Officer	Helen Buckingham Regulatory Consultant - Environmental Services & Port Health helen.buckingham@eastsoffolk.gov.uk 07775 714680

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

The council is required to produce a Food and Health & Safety Service Plan in the format prescribed by the Food Standards Agency (in its Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls) and as required by the Health and Safety Executive, as set out in the National Local Authority Enforcement Code – Health & Safety at Work England, Scotland and Wales.

The service plan must be submitted for elected member approval and must be reviewed to identify the council's performance against the plan, any variance from it and areas for improvement in the service.

The Food Safety and Health & Safety Service Plan 2021/23 includes information on the council's performance in meeting targets that were set out in the Service Plan for 2019/20 and recommends to Full Council the approval of a Food and Health & Safety Service Plan for 2021/23.

Options:

The council is required to produce a Food and Health & Safety Service Plan. The draft plan may be approved with no amendments being made or approved subject to amendments.

Recommendation/s:

It is recommended that Full Council

1. Notes the food safety and health & safety performance against the service plan for 2019/20, and
2. Approves the Service Plan for 2021/23 with or without amendment.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

Regular Community Health Briefings are held with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health. The work of services represented in this plan feature throughout East Suffolk Council's Strategic Plan and are therefore regularly monitored. Performance against meeting targets will be reported in the service plan for 2023/24, including summaries of the annual reporting to the Food Standards Agency's Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System and the Health and Safety Executive's LA intervention and enforcement activity return.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

East Suffolk Strategic Plan 2020-2024

East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023

East Suffolk Environmental Policy to 2023.

Environmental:

The Service Plan includes, for the first time, a section on Caring for our Environment and takes into account East Suffolk's Environmental Policy objective to aspire to be an exemplar in efficient and responsible use of natural resources.

Equalities and Diversity:

An Equality Impact Assessment (Reference: EQIA371236786) has been undertaken for the plan: no mitigation action identified.

Financial:

There are no new financial implications for the council arising from the proposals. Targets and service improvements will be met from budgets already approved for the delivery of the services in 2021/23 plus COVID-19 grant funding from external sources.

Human Resources:

No resource implications for the recommendation included in this report

ICT:

No resource implications for the recommendation included in this report

Legal:

No resource implications for the recommendation included in this report

Risk:

Low risk. Delivery of the functions as set out in the service plan are well established and are planned and monitored. The required delegations and authorisations are in place to ensure accountability of officer decisions. The services are accustomed to being flexible and adapt in response to changing legislation or other demands placed upon them.

External Consultees:	An online consultation process on a draft of the Service Plan has been carried out involving business associations and networks, food businesses directly and publicly via the council's social media channels. No views were received that were unsupportive of the contents of the service plan.
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Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: <i>(Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)</i>		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
How does this proposal support the priorities selected?			
Public health and safety is protected, including through regulatory services.			

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	<p>The Food Standards Agency's (FSA) Framework Agreement and the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) National Local Authority Enforcement Code require the council to review its performance against the 2019/20 Food and Health & Safety Service Plan, identify any variance from the plan and areas for service improvement. A Service Plan for 2020/21 was not published.</p> <p>As well as reviewing past performance the council is also required to approve a new Food and Health & Safety Service Plan for 2021/23 (Appendix A).</p> <p>The section headings of the plan follow the requirements of the Framework Agreement and appendices provide supporting statistics and other detailed information.</p>

This year the format of the plan has been reviewed and updated to make it a more engaging read, with photographs and illustrations throughout showing some of the important work the teams carry out. The approved service plan will be made available in a flip book version and hosted on East Suffolk's website and the website for Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority <https://www.paperturn-view.com/uk/east-suffolk/east-suffolk-food-and-health-safety-service-plan-2021-2023?pid=MTg186105&v=3.2>

This plan also reports, for the first time, on the work of the Corporate Health and Safety Team which is part of the same service area. This team has provided advice to the council on how to deliver COVID-19 secure services throughout the pandemic in ways that protect our staff and residents.

Reviews against the service plan, the identification of any variation from it and areas of improvement are set in the review section on pages 56 to 62.

Throughout 2020/21 the Food and Safety Team redeployed significant staff resources to respond to the many new emergency health protection laws and public health controls arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Reducing inspection visits also reduced foot fall and helped control the spread of COVID-19. The need for this redeployment was recognised by the FSA in advice to local authorities. The team continued to carry out higher risk food work but in 2020/21 much of the routine work was necessarily paused.

Appendix 12 reports on the Food and Safety Team's response to COVID-19 March 2020 to July 2021. The response is set out according to the different types of activities:

- Management, coordination and communication.
- Disseminating COVID-19 secure information to businesses and the public.
- Collaboration with the Health and Safety Executive – spot checks.
- Event safety.
- Monitoring arrangements and practices at venues through physical visits.
- Responding to incidents, information and concerns through physical visits.
- Enforcement action.
- Conclusions.

2 Current position

2.1	Significant changes to some of the services provided by Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority are taking place over the next 18 months, following the UK's exit from the European Union. This is arising from new biosecurity requirements placed upon consignments of goods from the EU.
2.2	A backlog of programmed food and safety inspections has arisen over the last 18 months as a result of COVID-19 restrictions upon businesses, the redeployment of staff onto other tasks and a necessary scaling back of officer interventions.

3 How to address current situation

3.1	Plans are in place to capably respond to new and changing demands on the port health service, including the recruitment and training of additional staff and operating a 24/7 service, in line with government expectations, trade demands and legislation.
3.2	A Recovery Plan is in place to prioritise inland food interventions based on risk. Its delivery uses existing staff time, working additional hours and the use of contractors. Funding is from existing approved budgets, supported by COVID-19 grant funding from government sources.

4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	The council is required to produce and submit a Food and Health & Safety Service Plan for member approval. The plan must review performance, identify variance and areas for improvement in the service.
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Appendices

Appendices:

Appendix A	East Suffolk Food and Safety Service Plan 2021/23 - draft
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Background reference papers:

Date	Type	Available From
2010	FSA Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities	environment@eastsoffolk.gov.uk
Refer to online document	HSE National Local Authority Enforcement Code Health and Safety at Work	https://www.hse.gov.uk/lau/la-enforcement-code.htm
14/10/2021	Equality Impact Assessment	environment@eastsoffolk.gov.uk