
Select Committee on the Environment 13th November 2006

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Food Service Plan 2006/2007

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee on progress with the activities detailed in the Directorate of the Urban Environment Food Service Plan 2006/2007.

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 27th June 2006.
7. A summary of the activities in the Food Service Plan 2006-07 completed at the half-year stage is contained in Appendix 1 of this report. However, items of note include:
 - High levels of high risk food safety inspections.
 - Successful delivery of the Food Standards Agency funded project to deliver

free training, support and on-site assistance to small food businesses in achieving compliance with the new requirement for all food businesses to produce a documented food safety management system.

- A further successful bid to the Food Standards Agency for £19,000 to support another 90 small food businesses to comply with the new requirements. This will enable a further six seminars for food businesses to take place between October 2006 and March 2007, including one to be delivered in Chinese and using Chinese speaking coaches to support the Chinese catering community in Dudley.
- Continuing delivery of the Dudley Food for Health Awards with 28 Gold, Silver or Bronze awards being made.
- National Food Safety Week in June was participated in with a shoppers' food safety event, include hand washing demonstrations, held in Dudley Town Centre.
- Three prosecutions/formal cautions were successfully concluded, one relating to the sale of an undercooked chicken meal from a fast food outlet which resulted in a £10,000 fine and costs. The other cases were butchers' shop selling out of date chicken and food hygiene regulations contraventions at a fish and chip shop. Four further cases are currently being processed with a view to prosecution.
- Trading Standards have prepared a food labelling lesson for year 8 pupils. This can be presented by teachers but officers from Trading Standards have so far delivered 4 sessions in three schools.
- Information packs prepared for use by caterers to raise awareness of allergens issues.

8. At the half year stage there is some under achievement on low risk food inspections and food standards inspections. This has been due to a number of factors including a high level of reactive work, officers undertaking key project work and actioned Freedom of Information Requests. 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, providing advice literature in a range of languages and providing training in other languages where there is sufficient demand.
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 2006-07 at the half-year stage be noted by members.



John Millar
Director of the Urban Environment

Contact Officer: Dolores Nellany
Telephone: 01384 814611
Email: dolores.nellany@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

Food Service Plan 2006/2007

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2006/2007**Progress up to 30th September 2006**

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	<u>ACHIEVED</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
High risk food safety inspections	100% (465)	94.6% (440)	High level of reactive work, particularly noise investigations, has impacted on inspection work. The 100% target is expected to be achieved by year-end.
High risk food standards inspections	100% (25)	64% (16)	It is expected that the 100% target will be achieved by the year end.
Medium risk food standards inspections	100% (155)	106% (165)	It is expected that the 100% target will be achieved by the year end.
Low risk food safety inspections	100% (127)	52% (66)	Due to litigation issues and a high level of reactive work including Freedom of Information requests, achievement on low risk inspections is lower than expected. The 100% target is expected to be achieved by year end.
To assist food businesses to comply with new food hygiene regulations requiring a documented food safety management system.	45 food business proprietors to attend seminars and receive one to one coaching	57 businesses attended seminars and received one to one coaching.	102 small food businesses assisted through this project since January 2006. In September 2006, a further grant of £19K awarded by Food Standards Agency to assist a further 90 businesses.
Microbiological food samples	250	260	

Compositional food samples	100	74	
Food complaints (FOS)	Approx 100	101 (100%)	Complaints relate to foreign bodies, microbiological or chemical contamination.
Food complaints (Trading Standards)	Approx 90	74	Most complaints relate to out of date foods
Food premises complaints (FOS)	Approx. 75	87	
Food advice enquiries (FOS)	Approx 100	96	Includes advice requests from businesses and members of the public.
Food Alerts	Approx 35	26 received	All alerts are appropriately actioned; this may involve contacting food businesses and/or issues of press releases.
Food borne disease notifications	Approx. 300	277 received including 127 campylobacter notifications	Campylobacter notifications dealt with by postal advice. All others require officer visit/contact.
Dudley Food for Health Awards Issued	To actively promote the Award during inspections at all eligible catering premises	28 awards given (13 Gold, 9 Silver, 6 Bronze)	Delivered in conjunction with PCT partners. Award encourages premises to promote healthy eating whilst complying with food hygiene regulations.
Educational and promotional work undertaken	Contribute to National Food Safety Week and deliver talks to various groups.	Shoppers' event in Dudley Town Centre June 2006. 5 food hygiene/safety talks delivered 13 talks delivered in relation to the	

	Provide information to catering establishments on food allergens	work of Trading Standards Information packs prepared for use by caterers to raise awareness of allergens issues	
Prosecutions/formal cautions concluded	-	3	Prosecution for sale of undercooked chicken resulted in £10K fine and costs; formal caution for sale of out of date chicken at a butchers shop; formal caution for food hygiene contraventions at a fish and chip shop. A further 4 food hygiene contravention cases are currently being considered for prosecution.