

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Council **DATE:** 26th July, 2011

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR DECISION**

RECOMMENDATION OF THE CABINET FROM ITS MEETING ON 13th JUNE 2011

STATUTORY SERVICE DELIVERY PLANS

1 Purpose of Report

To consider the recommendations of the Cabinet with regard to the Statutory Service Plans in relation to Food Safety, Health and Safety and Trading Standards.

2 Recommendation

The Council is requested to resolve that the Statutory Service Plans as circulated to all Members in relation to the Food Safety, Health & Safety and Trading Standards work undertaken by the Council be endorsed.

3 Community Strategy Priorities

The plans are based around ensuring that the Council is able to fulfil its statutory obligations under the relevant Regulatory Services legislation. However, the focus of projects within all the Services is geared towards Sloughs specific community and business needs, based on local intelligence and our work with partners. Examples of where the plans contribute are given below;

- **Celebrating Diversity, Enabling inclusion**
 - Supporting and encouraging all the cuisines in Slough to provide healthy eating (Catering for Health) choices, safe food businesses including importation of ethnic foods.
 - Safeguarding migrant and other vulnerable workers
- **Adding years to Life and Life to years**
 - Reducing risks in the work place with specific projects such as Estates Excellence, Management of Asbestos; increasing awareness of food labelling and healthy eating, contributing to reducing obesity and CHD rates in Slough;
- **Being Safe, Feeling Safe**
 - Underage sales education and enforcement; projects to reduce the incidence of violence in retail and licensed premises e.g. Work Safe Slough; Loan Shark project;

- **A Cleaner, Greener place to live, Work and Play**
 - Advice for Slough businesses on waste and pest control; animal by-products waste disposal. Advice on Public Safety issues at outdoor events.
- **Prosperity for All**
 - Supporting local businesses in meeting their legal requirements' through seminars and fully funded consultancy; 'Buy with Confidence' and Food Hygiene courses; in other languages and with signers for hard of hearing. Recognises good standards with the Safe Food award

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications of proposed action. It is anticipated that the plans can be implemented within existing resources. The situation will be closely monitored, however, and any future resourcing implications reported to Members for consideration.

(b) Risk Management

Recommendation	Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)
Approval of the plans	Limited risk to delivery from serious incidents such as Work Related Death Investigations, Animal Health Disease; food poisoning outbreak or unplanned staff absences	Contingency plans in place supported by re-assessment of priorities.
Failure to approve	Serious risk to delivery of statutory obligations, failure to delivery on projects that impact positively on health & well being issues in Slough	Re- assessment of resources and priorities

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There is a legal obligation for the Council to establish and approve statutory Service Plans for food, health & safety and trading standards. There are no Human Rights Act implications in this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

Equality Impact assessments have already been completed for the core policy areas of these Services

5 **Supporting Information**

5.1 National guidance on the delivery of the Authority's enforcement activities is issued by The Food Standards Agency, the Health and Safety Executive and the Department for Businesses, Innovation and Skills; setting out standards for service provision, monitoring and auditing arrangements, in order to ensure that local enforcement activities are undertaken in a fair and consistent manner.

5.1 The Regulatory Landscape continues to evolve; in the last year the Coalition Government commissioned a review of the operation of health & safety Laws and has recently adopted the proposals of the Young Report, 'Common Sense – Common Safety'. The report, amongst other things, aims to focus regulations and enforcement where they are most needed. We have taken this risk based approach at Slough for several years. There is also an ongoing review of the Consumer Landscape which may have implications for the delivery of trading standards services, particularly for regional and national investigations. In addition a consultation is due to start shortly on the enforcement of food safety and standards.

5.3. Service Plans are an important part of the process to ensure national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered to meet local needs effectively. These Service Plans, which are required to be reviewed and updated annually, will

- focus on local priorities and the needs of our local community
- provide an essential link with financial planning
- set objectives for the future, and identify major issues that cross service boundaries; and
- provide a means of managing performance and making performance comparisons

5.4. Local authorities are required to include in their Service Plans:

- information about the services they provide
- the means by which they will provide those services
- the means by which they will set/monitor performance targets and standards
- a review of performance against proposed targets

5.4 The focus of our resources will be on high risk activities whilst aiming to reduce the regulatory burden on compliant business: making the best use of the resources we have available and ensuring positive outcomes and value for money.

5.5 We will seek to strengthen existing partnerships and develop others to ensure effective delivery across service areas; using an evidenced based approach to help meet the specific needs of Slough as identified in the Slough Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

5.6 The Primary Authority scheme was introduced by the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 and enables a new type of partnership to be formed between business and local authorities. This will, in turn, streamline and simplify

the regulatory compliance demands on local businesses in relation to trading standards, food and health & safety matters. Approval to provide a Primary Authority business support scheme was agreed by Cabinet on 24th January 2011 and replaces our former Home Authority business advice service. The new service was introduced on 1 April 2011 and will be self funding

6 **Recommendation of the Cabinet**

The Cabinet recommended as set out in paragraph 2 above.

7 **Conclusion**

The proposed Service Plans illustrate the Council's commitment to continuous improvement and accountability. They also show how the local authority has adopted a balance of techniques and approaches to support local businesses, drive up compliance, enhance consumer protection and promote safety in the workplace.

8 **Appendices**

'A' Food Safety Service
'B' Health and Safety Service
'C' Trading Standards Service

(Circulated separately to Members and available on request from Democratic & Member Services Ext. 5317).

9 **Background Papers**

Agenda & Minutes – Cabinet 13th June, 2011.