

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Council

DATE: 23rd July 2013

CONTACT OFFICER: Nick Pontone, Democratic Services Officer
(For all enquiries) (01753) 875120

WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR DECISION**

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET FROM ITS MEETING HELD ON 15TH JULY 2013

STATUTORY SERVICE PLANS

1 Purpose of Report

To advise the Council of the recommendation of the Cabinet on approval of the Statutory Service Plans (SSPs) for 2013/14 in relation to.

- Food Safety Service
- Health and Safety Service
- Trading Standards Service

in accordance with the requirements laid down by external agencies.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

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

3 The Slough Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

3a. Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

The SSPs ensure 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, our work with partners and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). Examples of where the plans contribute to the SWS priorities include:

- **Economy and Skills**
 - Supporting local businesses in meeting their legal requirements ' through low cost training; 'Buy with Confidence' and Food Hygiene courses; recognising good standards in food businesses with the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.
 - Partnerships with businesses in the Primary Authority Scheme, providing regulatory compliance advice for businesses trading beyond the boundaries of Slough, reducing the regulatory burden upon those businesses and contributing to the prosperity of the town.

- **Health & Wellbeing**

- Supporting and encouraging all the cuisines in Slough to provide safe and healthy eating (Catering for Health) choices, including importation of ethnic foods.
- Reducing risks in the work place with specific projects based upon Sloughs needs such as Legionella Control.
- Increasing awareness of food labelling and healthy eating, contributing to reducing obesity and CHD rates in Slough.

- **Regeneration and Environment**

- Advice for Slough businesses on waste and pest control; animal by-products waste disposal; safe asbestos disposal.

- **Safer Communities**

- Underage sales education and enforcement; projects to reduce the incidence of violence in retail and licensed premises e.g. Loan Shark project;
- Safeguarding migrant and other vulnerable workers

- **Housing**

- Supporting owners and landlords to provide Energy Performance Certificates for accommodation

3b. **Slough Wellbeing Strategy: Cross-Cutting themes**

Civic responsibility

The majority of businesses in Slough want to be able to comply with legal requirements concerning food safety, fair trading and health & safety, The Service Delivery Plans are designed to help support businesses towards compliance with a graduated enforcement approach commencing with advice and sign posting to detailed information. Schemes such as Buy with Confidence and the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme recognise and reward businesses that do well; encouraging residents to use their local services and shops.

In addition, Estates Excellence is a partnership scheme supported by landlords such as SEGRO helping business to manage risks themselves.

Innovative work detailed in the SDPs illustrate the importance of increasing nutritional awareness through Catering for Health linked schemes supporting people to make healthy choices about the food they eat with vital links to reducing obesity and the associated poor health outcomes

Improving the image of the town

The Statutory Service Plans set out how the Council will meet its statutory obligations to maintain the pre-requisites that residents and visitors expect in a town like Slough; to be able to eat out without becoming ill, go to work without being injured, buy safe goods in the town's shops. The plans detail essential work that will both protect the reputation of Slough and improve its image.

A core part of the SSPs is the provision of assured regulatory advice to 32 national and international businesses, such as Mars, Honda, and Reckitt Benkiser. Slough has become a leader in the provision of Primary Authority advice contributing to the prosperity of the town and identifying Slough as a town that aims to reduce the regulatory burden for businesses.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

Key SSPs objectives are informed by evidence from the JSNA and aim to deliver positive outcomes via both legislative action and behaviour approaches to improve public and workplace health for example:

- **Reduce Inequalities in health.** Smoke free enforcement, tobacco control, underage sales test purchasing and counterfeit or illegally imported tobacco products investigations in partnership with SBC Licensing, Thames Valley Police and the UK Border Agency.
- **Reduce Adult and childhood Obesity.** In Slough the prevalence of obesity among children entering school in reception and at age 10/11 remains statistically *above* national rates at 11.3% and 21.2% respectively. The SPPs detail work on nutritional awareness and the roll out of catering for health in the Slough Community, together with a school meals survey which provides baseline data.
- **Improve the quality and availability of housing and environment for Slough residents.** Support for the Slough Sheds project with Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) enforcement and advice
- **Increase skills and employment opportunities.** Provide assured advice for businesses in Slough and specialist training for food handlers. Supporting legitimate businesses to prosper.
- **Reduce violent crime, domestic abuse and sexual abuse.** Advice and support in relation to control of underage sales of alcohol and knives, provision of proof of age cards

3c Corporate Plan 2012/13

The SSPs link directly to the Corporate Plan and the Council's vision through the food safety, health and safety, and trading standards action plans for the front line delivery of services;

- Improve customer experience – we seek and act upon feedback from our customers and work with MyCouncil advisors support and signpost customers. We have a clear Customer Charter
- Deliver high quality services to meet local needs. Services are based upon local evidence of risk and need and are targeted specifically for Slough's residents, visitors and businesses.
- Develop new ways of working, deliver local and national change, develop a skilled and capable workforce. The recently formed Consumer Protection & Business Compliance group of services work collaboratively to develop and delivery innovative and flexible, value for money services such as the Olympic response Team and primary Authority Partnerships
- Achieve value for money. Officers will have completed the assessment process for the national Regulators Developments needs Analysis by September 2013 and each will have an individual training programme to compliment development identified during their annual appraisal

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

It is anticipated that the plans will be implemented within existing resources. However, the situation will be closely monitored as unplanned reactive pressures,

such as major investigations, will have resourcing implications which will be reported to members for their consideration.

Costs recovered from Primary Authority work will fund additional specialist officers at no extra cost to the Council.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	None	
Property	None	
Human Rights	None	The work of the Teams protects worker and consumer rights in Slough
Health and Safety	None for SBC workforce. Risk Assessments are in place for all officer activities	The work of the Teams supports businesses in Slough toward sensible risk management, enhancing health & safety conditions in Slough.
Employment Issues	None	Costs recovered from Primary Authority work can be used to employ additional officers at no increased cost to the Council, helping to maintain a flexible and resilient workforce
Equalities Issues	None. Equality Impact Assessments have been completed	The work of the teams actively supports equality in the work place for example, with disability access and awareness issues.
Community Support	None	The teams engage in neighbourhood and Community action events
Communications	None	The Teams engage with businesses and residents on a daily basis and are able to engage with them on key issues passing on important information. In newsletters. Regular press releases are issued via the Councils Comms Team and the Trading Standards Team has a regularly interview slot on BBC Radio Berkshire

Community Safety	None	The Teams work closely with SBC Community Safety, Licensing and TVP particularly in relation to underage sales, rogue traders, loan sharks
Financial	Risk from complex criminal investigations or outbreaks that demand considerable officer time resulting in pressure upon resources to complete statutory inspections within timescales set by national enforcement bodies. Mitigated by the re-prioritisation of resources where possible.	The income from Primary Authority work can be used to employ additional officers at no increased cost to the Council
Timetable for delivery	Risk from complex criminal investigations or outbreaks that demand considerable officer time resulting in pressure upon resources to complete statutory inspections within timescales set by national enforcement bodies. Mitigated by the re-prioritisation of resources where possible.	
Project Capacity	Risk from complex criminal investigations that demand considerable officer time resulting in pressure upon resources to complete statutory inspections within timescales set by national enforcement bodies. Mitigated by the re-prioritisation of resources where possible.	
Other Failure to endorse the SDPs	Serious risk to delivery of statutory obligations, failure to delivery on projects that impact positively on health & well being issues in Slough. Potential risk to Slough Borough Council reputation.	

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications, the work detailed in the SDPs is based upon UK and European legislation that has already been assessed in terms Human Rights Act Implications

Equalities Impact Assessment

Equalities Impact assessments have been completed on key policies contained within the SDPs. However, the work detailed in the SDPs is based upon UK and European legislation that has already been assessed in terms of Equality Impact Assessment

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.
- 5.2 Statutory 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 Statutory 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
- 5.3 Local authorities are required to include in their Statutory 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 Regulatory Landscape continues to evolve with new guidance being issued from national Regulators bodies such as the Health & Safety Executive and Better Regulation Office with the aim to focus regulations and enforcement where they are most needed, in line with the 'Red Tape Challenge'; we have taken this risk based approach at Slough for several years. There are further changes in relation to the Consumer Landscape with the creation of a National Trading Standards Board which may have implications for the delivery of trading standards services, particularly for regional and national investigations.
- 5.5 In addition the creation of Public Health England and the transfer of the public health responsibility the Council provide opportunities for the work detailed in the SSPs in relation to reducing health inequalities and improving public health outcomes, to be linked even more closely to that of other Council teams and our partners.

- 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. The aim being to streamline and simplify the national regulatory compliance demands on local businesses in relation to trading standards, food and health & safety matters. The scheme has been phenomenally successful in Slough in the last year and has secured 32 successful agreements with national and international businesses based in the town such as; Reckitt Benkiser, Mars, Telefonica, Citroen, Fiat and Burger King.
- 5.7 The Teams have lost resources during the last two years and our work will continue to focus very specifically upon areas of high risk whilst aiming to reduce the regulatory burden on compliant business: continuing to make the best use of the resources we have available and ensuring positive outcomes and value for money.
- 5.8 We will seek to strengthen existing partnerships and develop others to ensure effective delivery across service areas; using an evidenced based approach to help deliver services that meet the specific needs of Slough based upon the evidence available and as identified in the Slough Wellbeing Strategy and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

6 **Conclusion**

The proposed Statutory Service Plans illustrate our commitment to continuous improvement and accountability, whilst responding flexibly to ongoing changes in both the regulatory and consumer landscapes. They also show how the local authority has successfully adopted a balance of techniques and approaches to support local businesses, drive up compliance, enhance consumer protection and promote, with our partners, safety and wellbeing in the workplace and our community

7 **Recommendation from the Cabinet**

The Cabinet considered the Statutory Service Plans at its meeting on 15th July 2013 and recommended that they be approved.

8 **Appendices**

- A Food Safety & Standards, Service Delivery Plan 2013/14
- B Health & Safety, Service Delivery Plan 2013/14
- C Trading Standards, Service Delivery Plan 2013/14

9 **Background Papers**

- '1' Food Standards Agency Framework Document
- '2' National Local Authority Code, Health & Safety at Work.
- '3' The Health & Safety of Great Britain\ Be part of the Solution: HSE
- '4' Common Sense – Common Safety, The Young Report
- '5' Primary Authority, Local Better Regulation Office
- '6' Priority Regulatory Outcomes, Local Better Regulation Office