

Subject: Food Law Enforcement Service
Plan and Sampling Policy

Status: For Publication

Report to: The Cabinet
Full Council

Date: 19th September 2007
19th December 2007

Report of: Head of Street Scene and Neighbourhood Services

Portfolio Holder: Clean and Green Rossendale

Key Decision: No

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To obtain formal approval by Members for the attached Plan and Policy.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objective.

- Delivering Quality Services to Customers (Customers, Improvement)
 - The organisation and management of the Food Service function is based on the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement, Codes of Practice and Guidance as well as the Service's Quality Management System and is subject to external audit by other Local Authorities as well as the FSA itself.
- Promoting Rossendale as a cracking place to live and visit (Economy)
 - By working with businesses and offering support, advice and information we are helping businesses to comply with legislation and thereby strengthen their businesses.
- Improving health and well being across the Borough (Health, Housing)
 - The whole purpose of food law enforcement is to ensure that food is produced, manufactured, handled and transported so that it is safe and poses no risk to consumers. In addition, our work with the Food Forum is designed to impact on issues such as obesity and healthy eating which are also important factors in the way food impacts on people's health.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report. The content of the Plan and Policy are reflected in the Environmental Health Service's current Service Plan.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Food Standards Agency was established to have a key role in overseeing local authority enforcement activities. They have been proactive in setting and monitoring standards and auditing local authorities' enforcement activities in order to ensure that this activity is effective and undertaken on a consistent basis. Powers to enable the Agency to monitor and audit local authorities are contained in the Food Standards Act 1999.
- 4.2 Service Plans are seen to be an important part of the process to ensure national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally. They have produced Guidance and Codes of Practice to aid local authorities in their enforcement function. They have also produced a template for the Service Plan to enable Authorities to demonstrate, in a consistent format, how the Authority is providing a balanced service in relation to its constituent functions and how it performs.
- 4.3 The Framework agreement was signed on behalf of Local Authorities in 2001 by the Local Authorities Co-ordinating Body on Food and Trading Standards (now known as LACORS) and came into force on 1st April 2001. A requirement of the agreement is that Food Service Plans, in the required format, be submitted to the relevant member forum for approval to ensure local transparency and accountability.
- 4.4 The Framework Agreement also requires each Local Authority to maintain and implement a documented sampling policy and programme in accordance with any centrally issued or relevant guidance. The Policy should be a public document although the Sampling Programme, or when and where sampling will be undertaken, is not public information as it may jeopardize the effectiveness of the exercise.
- 4.5 The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2007/8 and Sampling Policy are attached to this report.

5. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE

- 5.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from the recommendations of the report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF REGULATORY SERVICES

- 6.1 This is a very important report in the context of food safety.

7. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

7.1 There are no immediate Human Resource implications arising from this report.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 A Food Law Enforcement Service Plan and Sampling Policy have been produced in accordance with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency and in compliance with their standards and formats.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Full Council approves the contents of the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2007/8 and Sampling Policy

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 Consultation on the contents of the plan is carried out by making the Plan available through the Food Newsletter, a publication produced by the Rossendale Environmental Health Service which is distributed to all food businesses in Rossendale twice a year. Consultation is also undertaken through membership of a Lancashire-wide Food Enforcement Officers Group and Rossendale Food Forum so that current activities and improvements can be compared and incorporated on a continuous basis.

11. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required Yes

Is an Equality Impact Assessment attached Yes

Contact Officer	
Name	Hayley Robinson-Mitchell
Position	Principal Environmental Health Officer
Service / Team	Environmental Health Service
Telephone	01706 252562
Email address	hayleymitchell@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement Food Standards Agency 2001 as amended	Environmental Health Office Stubbylee Hall Stubbylee Lane Bacup OL13 0DE