

Stratford on Avon District Council

Food and Safety Team

Food Safety Service Plan 2019/20

1. Service aims and objectives

1.1 Aims and objectives

The aim of the service is to provide a comprehensive food safety service in order to protect the health of residents of, and visitors to, Stratford on Avon District, while balancing this with the need to allow and help businesses to grow and develop.

1.2 Links to corporate objectives

The vision - Stratford-on-Avon District will be recognised as a place of opportunity and economic prosperity in order to provide a better quality of life for all who live, work and visit.

There are three main objectives: A flourishing local economy, people and their environment, responsible community leadership

The food and safety service fits within the first two of these objectives.

2. Background

2.1 Local Authority Profile

Stratford-on-Avon District Council is one of five District Councils in Warwickshire set within the West Midlands region. Geographically half the size of the county, it is the 19th largest District in England, covering an area of 979 sq. km.

There are four market towns in the District, Stratford-upon-Avon, Alcester, Shipston-on-Stour and Southam, with over 110 parishes. Over 121,000 people live in the District, the largest town being Stratford-upon-Avon with more than 27,000 residents.

The town of Stratford-upon-Avon is internationally renowned for its association with William Shakespeare, which helps to attract over 6 million visitors a year to the District. The Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty extends into the southern fringes of the District.

In the Residents' Survey undertaken in 2014, our residents told us that the quality of life in the District was good, with 90% of them satisfied with their local area as a place to live. The Council is proud of its achievements and is committed to working together in partnership with other organisations to deliver services that match customers' needs.

The health of people in Stratford-on-Avon is generally better than the England average. Stratford-on-Avon is one of the 20% least deprived districts/unitary authorities in England, however about 9% (1,700) of children live in low income families. The District has an older population when compared with the national averages, with exactly 25% of residents aged over 65 compared to a national average of approximately 16%.

2.2 Organisational structure

Refer to Appendix A

2.3 Scope of the service

The food and safety service provides the full range of services detailed in section 3 in-house, alongside the delivery of services relating to health and safety, no-smoking and control of non-foodborne infectious disease.

2.4 Demands on the service

At time of writing, the profile of establishments within the district is as follows:

Category A: 2

Category B: 79

Category C: 538

Category D: 739

Category E: 1211

Approved premises: 11

There are a number of specialist cheese producers and on-farm milk pasteurisers within the district that require help, support and oversight.

The town's status as a major tourist destination means that food establishments within the town have customers from around the world, which leads to any food poisoning outbreaks having an international dimension.

The service is provided between the hours of 08:45 to 17:15 Monday to Wednesday and 08:45 to 17:00 Thursday and Friday. Officers work outside these hours when required by prior arrangement. The service can be accessed in person at the Council's reception, by telephone, email, eForm and letter.

2.5 Regulation policy

The Council has an enforcement policy which is followed when taking decisions over the appropriate course of action for breaches of legislations.

3. Service delivery

3.1 Interventions at establishments

The Council follows the inspection schedules dictated by the risk ratings detailed in the Food Law Code of Practice. For this year, this will require the following number of inspections:

Category A: 2

Category B: 34

Category C: 166

Category D: 243

Category E: 427

Approved premises: 11

Plus any outstanding inspections carried-over from the previous year, and new registrations during the year (around 100 anticipated)

Category C & D premises that achieved a 5 rating at their last inspection will be subject to partial inspection (unless matters of evident concern dictate otherwise). Other Category A-D (inclusive) premises will be subject to full inspection. Alternative enforcement strategies will be used for Category E premises.

All newly-registered premises will be physically inspected.

It is anticipated that this work will give rise to approximately 100 revisits (~25% of A-D) to ensure compliance following routine inspection.

In addition to these inspections we will carry-out visits to outstanding premises identified as high risk for compliance with regulations relating to allergens to provide advice and education.

3.2 Complaints

We will deal with complaints made about standards in, products bought from, or alleged food poisonings arising from, food businesses within our district in accordance with our published service standards.

In 2018-19 we received 369 complaints about premises within our district.

3.3 Home Authority and Primary Authority scheme

We do not have any Home or Primary Authority partnerships and do not currently have resources in order to support one, but we would consider any approach made by a business to provide one.

3.4 Advice to business

We are committed to providing advice to businesses at all stages of their development, in order to help them operate safely and profitably and within a level playing field of competition where businesses that don't comply with the law don't gain a competitive advantage. Our website contains easily accessible information tailored to business needs. We contribute to the Better Business for All initiative. We proactively offer advice visits to relevant newly-registered businesses prior to their first inspection.

3.5 Sampling

We will carry-out sampling according to the national programme, where it is indicated as part of an outbreak investigation, and where it helps establishing businesses. It is our aim to carry-out 6 sampling days through the course of the year. Samples are analysed by Public Health England in their laboratories (precise arrangements liable to change).

3.6 Control and investigation of outbreaks and food related infectious disease

We respond to notifications of foodborne infectious disease following the regional protocol for the investigation of gastrointestinal disease and work with colleagues in Public Health England to establish outbreak control teams and contribute appropriately. In 2018-19 we received 143 notifications of foodborne infectious disease.

3.7 Safety incidents

We respond to safety incidents reported by the FSA as directed.

3.8 Liaison with other organisations

We are part of the Coventry and Warwickshire Food Liaison Group

We work with Public Health England in the investigation of cases of foodborne infectious disease.

We have informal resilience arrangement with other Warwickshire authorities to cover times of service stress, such as outbreak investigations, and our Environmental Protection Team can provide cover in emergencies.

We subscribe to RIAMS for up-to date generic procedures.

3.9 Promotional work and other non-official control interventions

None identified.

4. Resources

4.1 Financial allocation

The service has a budget of c£370k, split approximately 80% food safety, 20% health and safety.

4.2 Staffing allocation

1 FTE - Team Leader (Food & Safety); EHRB-registered EHP with 9 years' post-qualification experience

0.6 FTE – EHO; EHRB-registered EHP with 10 years' post-qualification experience

1.0 FTE - Food and Safety Officer; EHRB-registered EHP with 3 years' post-qualification experience and 10 years' experience following completion of the Higher Certificate in Food Premises Inspection.

0.6 FTE – Food and Safety Officer; EHRB-registered EHP with 18 years' post-qualification experience

1.0 FTE – Technical Officer; working toward qualification (currently undertaking Higher Certificate in Food Premises Inspection) under supervision of qualified officers

1 FTE - Technician providing support, shared with the Environmental Protection Team

From within that allocation, approximately 1 FTE will carry out H&S work.

4.3 Staff development plan

Officers will maintain their registration through attending CPD accredited events.

Good practice is shared during monthly team meetings.

The Technical Officer is attending the Higher Certificate in Food Control.

5. Quality assessment

5.1 Quality assessment and internal monitoring

The service will be monitored by the Food and Safety Team Leader in both qualitative and quantitative senses. The team meets monthly which includes discussion of important issues, staff have one-to-ones with the Team Leader and staff appraisals are carried-out annually.

The service was subject to inter-authority audit in March 2018, and further inter-authority audits are scheduled during 2019/20. The service was also audited internally during December 2018.

6. Review

6.1 Review against the service plan

This will be monitored and reported back to the Head of Service and Regulatory Committee quarterly.

6.2 Identification from any variation from the service plan

To be identified during the year. The plan may change if material information or intelligence comes to light during the year that leads to officer time being more productively spent on other food enforcement activities.

6.3 Areas of improvement

The service's procedures will be reviewed and amended where necessary. Service improvements are discussed at monthly team meetings.

Wayne Jones MSc MCIEH
Environmental Health Team Leader (Food & Safety)
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