

DISTRICT COUNCIL and MIDSUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

To: Strategy Committee	Report Number: M166
From: Head of Environment	Date of meeting: 14 March 2013

Mid Suffolk and Babergh Food Safety and Health and Safety Service Plans 2013/14

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider and approve the joint Mid Suffolk and Babergh Food Safety and Health and Safety service plans for 2013/14.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the joint Mid Suffolk and Babergh Food Safety and Health and Safety service plans 2013/14 be approved.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The proposed plans are in line with the resources identified for the integrated Food and Safety team proposals so that much of the financial commitment for 2013/14, which is approximately 90% staffing costs, will be made through the process of approval of the Operational Delivery Team (ODT). If the final ODT differs significantly from the one in the consultation document the plans will need to be reviewed accordingly.
- 3.2 As a reduction in the overall staff numbers is implicit in the operational delivery team proposals for this team no budgetary growth is planned or anticipated from 2012/13 to 2013/14 and it is likely that there will be a reduction in total costs.

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 This report does not closely link to any of the Councils' Corporate / Significant Business Risks.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 None.

6. Equality Analysis

Equality analysis screening has been carried out. The initial conclusion from screening is that the proposed service plans do not impact either positively or negatively in terms of the elimination of discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The screening has been submitted to the Equality Analysis Group.

7. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

- 7.1 The two service plans are written with the impending integration of resources between Babergh and Mid Suffolk in mind and with the intention of utilising the combined resources to best effect.
- 7.2 It is acknowledged that during 2013/14 the shared service will be reviewing the way in which services are provided in line with the transformational intent of the two local authorities.
- 7.3 Reference is made, in the plans, to the development of working arrangements between the district and borough council food safety and health and safety services and the County council trading standards service where there is the potential for the creation of greater resilience for the services and additional value to the public and compliant businesses.

8. Key Information

- 8.1 The Food Standards Agency (framework agreement) and Health and Safety Executive (section 18 standard) require the production of these two service plans.
- 8.2 To ensure local transparency and accountability they should be considered and approved annually by the appropriate member forum. Members are therefore asked to consider the proposed plans and offer any comments.
- 8.3 The plans are drafted on the basis that the current proposals for an integrated Food and Safety service will be approved following the 90 day consultation so that should staffing allocations change what the service could achieve through these plans would have to be quickly reviewed.

9. Appendices

Title	Location
(a) Food and Safety Service, Food Safety Service Plan 2013/14	Appendix 1
(b) Food and Safety Service, Health and Safety Service Plan 2013/14	Appendix 2

10. Background Documents

- 10.1 FSA Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement; Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/enforcement/frameworkagreementno5.pdf>
- 10.2 HSE Section 18 Guidance to Local Authorities on Health and Safety in Local Authority Enforced Sectors <http://www.hse.gov.uk/section18/index.htm>

Author:

John Grayling
Corporate Manager – Food and Safety

01449 724722
john.grayling@midsuffolk.gov.uk



Food and Safety Service Food Safety Service Plan 2013/14

1. INTRODUCTION

The Food Safety Service Plan is an expression of the Councils' continuing commitment to the Food Safety Service. It covers the key areas of Food Safety enforcement and the relevant management arrangements and targets against which Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils will monitor service delivery.

It has been compiled in accordance with the guidance issued by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and includes all the detailed information required by the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement.

The purpose of the service unit, with regards to food safety, is to sustain and improve the standards of safety and quality of food manufactured, prepared and supplied in Babergh and Mid Suffolk. To achieve this, the service will work to support food businesses and to provide a level regulatory playing field for them through advice, risk based audits, complaint investigation, training and a programme of sampling. The use of a publicised food hygiene rating system will give well run food businesses the opportunity to demonstrate how good they are in relation to others and this will, over time, help to raise standards generally.

2. KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The food safety service contributes to the following emerging strategic priorities:

Babergh.

- Support and facilitate active, healthy and safe communities where people can thrive.
- Shape influence and provide the conditions to deliver growth whilst protecting and enhancing our environment.

Mid Suffolk.

- Encourage and support individuals and communities to be self sufficient, strong, healthy and safe.
- Lead and shape the local economy by promoting and helping to deliver sustainable economic growth.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A brief profile of the two districts

Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Councils run the length of central Suffolk between Essex and Norfolk. The administrative bases are in Needham Market and Hadleigh.

The districts cover an area of over 146,000 hectares, with a population of around 178,000 living in 200 parishes. The majority of the population live in villages. The principal towns are Stowmarket and Sudbury.

3.2 Organisational structure

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have a joint Management Team of six Heads of Service, three Directors and a Chief Executive. The Food and Safety service sits within the Environment service group of the Place Directorate. The Food and Safety service has a Corporate Manager reporting to the Head of Environment.

The Health Protection Agency in Collingdale is the Council's Food Examiner and the Public Analyst is Eurofins, London.

3.3 Scope of the food safety service

The service may be split into two broad areas – Proactive and Reactive.

Proactive includes:

- Inspections of food premises and food
- Sampling of food from those premises
- Enforcement of Food Safety law
- Education of Food Handlers
- Sampling private water supplies

Reactive includes:

- Investigating and controlling outbreaks of Food Poisoning/Infectious Diseases
- Responding to Food Alerts
- Investigating complaints about food and food businesses
- Dealing with unfit food
- Issue of export certificates

The core food safety service is provided directly by MSDC/Babergh employees but specialist contractors may be used for short-term projects or where capacity is an issue.

3.4 Demands on the service

Food premises are subject to interventions at intervals determined by risk rating in accordance with the inspection rating system within the FSA

Code. This system rates food premises according to the type of food sold, the nature of the trading and the overall food safety standards of the business. The frequency of inspection is dependent on the rating score obtained for each premises.

The number of premises within each risk rating always fluctuates to some extent as businesses close and new ones open. The figures projected for 31st March 2013, at the time of writing this plan are as follows:

Table 1

Risk Rating	Inspection Interval	Total Number of premises	Number of planned inspections
A	6 monthly	10	20
B	12 monthly	69	69
C	18 monthly	468	305
D	24 monthly	356	153
E	36 monthly	1,037	225
Total		1,940	772

There are a total of 1,940 food premises of which 16 are approved under EU Regulation 853/2004.

In addition to food businesses that are based in the two districts, there are a variety of events and occurrences that involve visiting food businesses where the food and safety team need to spend some time ensuring food safety. These include: regular town markets in Stowmarket and Sudbury; farmers markets in Hadleigh, Sudbury, Lavenham, Harkstead, Hartest, Stradbroke, Rickinghall, Needham Market and Stowmarket; amongst others.

Within the area there are a number of major food companies trading nationally and internationally. These include a sushi manufacturer, malt producer, herb processors, a fruit juice producer, a curry sauce manufacturer, a chocolate manufacturer and a vinegar/cider producer.

3.5 Enforcement policy

The two Councils have adopted a joint enforcement policy. All officers are expected to act in accordance with this policy which is freely available for inspection by the public and local businesses and is posted on the Councils' websites.

4. SERVICE DELIVERY

4.1 Inspection of food businesses

The Council is committed to carrying out inspections at a frequency that is not less than that determined by the Food Safety Act Code of Practice. The previous separate council services will have undertaken 682 routine or initial food safety inspections from the period 1 April 2012 to the 31 March 2013 plus revisits where necessary.

In line with the Food Law Code of Practice interventions other than inspections have been adopted in respect of certain, particularly low risk, premises. For the lowest risk businesses a telephone call is made to the business in order to assess whether there have been any changes since the last inspection, the extent of the business and the level of food safety control. Many low risk premises may still need to be visited by an officer to gather information regarding food safety. It is possible to use an officer not qualified in accordance with the Code of Practice to do this work thereby maximising the use of resources. The information gathered will be assessed and a decision made as to what further action is required. This could range from no further action to an inspection. An inspection is likely to be triggered if other contact cannot be made.

As in previous years, the concentration of activity for qualified officers will be in carrying out 100% of all high risk and approved premises inspections due as part of the inspection programme. In 2012/13 the emphasis has been on the prevention of cross contamination between raw and ready to eat foods to reduce the risk of food poisoning with E. coli 0157, following guidance published by the FSA in February 2011. This will, to some extent, continue into 2013/14.

A primary aim of the inspection process is to achieve measurable year on year improvements in inspection outcomes. As a result inspection/survey/campaign activity may be substituted in favour of more inspections/enforcement action of higher risk premises if the local need outweighs the importance of meeting nationally set output targets.

Revisits are made where significant breaches of food safety legislation are found at the time of an initial inspection, where there are a large number of minor offences, where there is a history of non-compliance or where there is little or no confidence in the management of the premises.

Previous National Indicator (NI) 184 measures the percentage of premises which are 'broadly compliant' with food safety legislation. Broadly compliant equates to a food premise scoring no more than 30 points when risk rated in respect of hygiene, structure and confidence in management as detailed in the FSA Code of practice. The following table shows the history of 'broad compliance' for premises in the two districts.

Percentage of Broadly compliant food premises:

District	2009	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Babergh	87%	91%	91%	91%
Mid Suffolk	71%	81%	81%	77%

One of the aims of the Food Safety service is to increase the percentage of food businesses achieving broad compliance so the slight decrease on the Mid Suffolk side for the most recent full year figures, if it should prove to be a trend, would be cause for concern.

4.2 Food complaints and complaints about food premises

The Council investigates all complaints it receives relating to food where it is the enforcement authority and will liaise with the Home, Primary and Originating Authority where appropriate. In 2011/2012 there were 59 food complaints and 42 food premises complaints, these relatively low numbers are an indication of the good levels of general compliance that the previous separate food and safety services have managed to develop.

The Food Safety service aims to make a first response to this type of complaint within one working day.

4.3 Home authority and primary authority principles

The two councils support the Home Authority Principle and provides advice to businesses where it acts as the Home or Originating Authority. Officers have regard to information that they receive from any liaison with Home/Oriinating Authorities and where advice has been received, the relevant Authority will be kept informed of actions taken by this Council.

In practice we act as the Home Authority on an informal basis for a handful of businesses. As such, the resources allocated to this area of work are fairly small at this time.

The Council acknowledges the primary authority system and appropriate adjustments are made to the way in which interventions are made when businesses have paid another local authority for a primary authority arrangement.

4.4 Advice to businesses

Officers are committed to building positive working relationships with food business proprietors and work with them to help them comply with the law and to improve food safety standards. There is also a comprehensive library of information sheets and leaflets which are distributed free of charge. Both new and existing businesses are encouraged to contact the service for advice. In 2012/2013 there were more than 230 food advice requests, many of the requests related to the starting up of small independent businesses. This compares with 292 in 2011/12 and the reduction possibly reflects the state of the local economy.

4.5 Training for Food Handlers

The service will offer a minimum of four level two 'award in food safety in catering' food hygiene training courses and plans to arrange two refresher courses during 2013/14.

Provision of this type of training, apart from fulfilling the obvious need that businesses and food-handlers have, helps to develop a constructive relationship with food businesses in the area identifying the regulatory local authorities as a source of help and guidance.

Training courses are run on a cost neutral basis. There is no scope for developing training courses as an income stream as higher fees would both put applicants for training off and result in other organisations that run on a not for profit basis attracting the same participants.

4.6 Food Hygiene Rating System (FHRS)

The introduction of Scores On The Doors by both Babergh and Mid Suffolk has had a positive effect on business throughout the two districts. There has been much interest from food business operators and as a result the desire, by businesses, to improve food standards appears to have risen.

The Scores On The Doors commercial website has now been effectively taken over by the FSA FHRS system so that where the advantages of access to information and consistency of use by local authorities had been with Scores On The Doors, the FSA have manoeuvred the majority of local authorities to participating in the FHRS. Mid Suffolk and Babergh have taken advantage of grant funding from the FSA during 2012/13 to convert to the FHRS and will from April 2013 operate this rating system across both districts.

4.7 Food inspection and sampling

Food sampling is carried out to establish whether foodstuffs are safe to eat and primarily considers microbiological content.

In the past, food samples have been taken either in response to complaints or as part of the Council's proactive surveillance procedures for ensuring that food produced and/or sold in Mid Suffolk is safe to eat. The Council has participated in a regional sampling programme, coordinated by the Health Protection Agency, across Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire.

With current budget pressures, the continued involvement of the two authorities in the regional sampling programme is under review. Sampling will continue in response to issues arising from complaints or from the identification of problems through other interventions.

4.8 Control and investigation of outbreaks and food related infectious diseases

Notifiable infectious diseases are reported to the Food and Safety service by the Health Protection Agency. Some reported illness requires investigation by the local authorities to both establish the cause and to try and limit spread. All food poisoning or suspected food poisoning notifications are responded to and the aim is to do this on the day of receipt for the most serious diseases and within three days for the remainder.

Investigation and control of major outbreaks is undertaken in conjunction with the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control at the Health Protection Agency. Investigation, the establishment of an Outbreak Control Team and control measures are all implemented in accordance with the agreed Suffolk Outbreak Control Plan. This plan is subject to annual review and was devised with input from the Suffolk Environmental Health services.

Food poisoning outbreaks can be very resource intensive but planning is extremely difficult due to their unpredictability.

The following persons have been appointed as the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control and Proper Officer for the purposes of relevant legislation:

Dr. Hamid Mahgoub (Lead for Suffolk)
Dr. Chris Williams
Dr. Kate King
Dr. Bernadette Nazareth

The total numbers of infectious disease notifications for 2012/13 (at the time of drafting this report) were:

Babergh - 170

Mid Suffolk - 222

4.9 Food safety incidents

The Council receives electronic notifications of all Food Alerts issued by the Food Standards Agency. Officers respond to such notifications in accordance with the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice. The Councils have standard operating procedures for dealing with Food Alerts that ensure a nominated Officer is informed immediately on receipt.

Alerts are categorised as either for information or for action.
The number of Food Alerts received in 2011/2012 was as follows:

CATEGORY	NUMBER
For Information	34
For Action	9

None of the Food Safety Incidents were found to have major implications for Mid Suffolk or Babergh.

The most notable incident of 2012/13 related to the importation of corned beef for distribution by Tesco with excess levels albendazole, a veterinary drug used to treat for tapeworms. The problem was identified by Port Health at Felixstowe but the product had already left the port when they got the test results. After the Food and Safety service intervened a product withdrawal was carried out by Tesco and the service supervised disposal of some of the product from a warehouse in Mendlesham.

4.10 Liaison with other organisations and partnership working

Officers represent the Council at the following meetings: -

- Suffolk Food Liaison Group
- FSA Food Leads Regional Meetings
- Suffolk Senior Environmental Health Managers Group

These Groups offer the opportunity to share information, organise low cost training and help to ensure consistent enforcement.

With the general reduction in resources available to Suffolk environmental health services over the previous two years, resilience has been adversely affected. One initiative taken to counter the likely problems that would occur if there were a major problem is the development of an authorisation agreement between the seven district and borough councils so that officers could work in other districts, in relation to food safety and health and safety, should the need arise. The type of event where this arrangement could be beneficial includes a major food poisoning outbreak or a significant investigation where many witness statements are needed. The agreement will also facilitate topic based project work where focussed efforts can be made in individual districts.

Discussions are being held with Suffolk Trading Standards to identify whether the joint authorisation initiative can be extended to include the Suffolk County Council trading standards service.

Work will be carried out through 2013/14 to generally improve the ways in which the food and safety service works with the Suffolk trading standards service. We will be looking for areas where efficiencies can be created and where it may be possible to reduce the total number of visits to businesses. This will start with workshops planned in the summer of 2013.

4.11 Food safety promotion

Promotional activities are usually carried out in support of national food safety week. In 2012, stalls were put up on the markets at Sudbury and Stowmarket to promote safe food on a budget. The food safety service will support food safety week activities again in 2013.

Mission Possible, the well received project designed to teach food hygiene to Key Stage 2 pupils, has continued to be run in the Mid Suffolk area and it is intended that in 2013/14 it will extend to the Babergh area too. Additional material resources at minimal cost have been obtained and a small budget maintained to fund the consumable elements of the project.

The food and safety service will continue to publish appropriate 'Foodwise' newsletters for businesses in 2013/14.

At the end of 2012/13, the Food and Safety service replaced the Scores On The Doors system with the Food Hygiene Rating System (FHRS). This is to bring the two councils in line with most of the rest of the UK. The FHRS gives consumers the opportunity to see how the hygiene of food premises has been rated by the local authority before they decide whether to eat food from that business. The FHRS rating can be displayed by the business, although this is not compulsory, and is also available on-line or via a smartphone app from the FSA. The FHRS also provides a commercial incentive to food businesses to improve and reduces the opportunity for non-compliant businesses to compete with an unfair advantage over compliant businesses.

Once the integrated Food and Safety service has been established, further food safety promotional activities will be considered dependant on the capacity of the new service.

5. RESOURCES

5.1 Financial

At the time of drafting, the service budget allocated to the food safety element of the food and safety service for 2013/14 had yet to be finalised as it is tied to the current staff consultation process for the structure of the new joint team. The budget will be finalised following the end of the consultation period and appointment of staff to the new team.

5.2 Staffing allocation

For 2013/14 the planned Food and Safety service establishment is:



The main work areas of the service unit are in relation to food safety, occupational health and safety, infectious diseases, private water supplies, health promotion and some licensing regulatory functions.

All members of the service team carry out food safety related work with an estimated full time equivalent staffing allocation to food law related matters as follows: 1.5 Senior Food and Safety Officers; 2.75 Food and Safety Officers qualified in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice; 1.25 Technical Support Officers not qualified in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice.

5.3 Staff Development

Training needs will be determined in an ongoing way and as part of the annual appraisal process and include in-house and external training opportunities. Appraisal records will be personal to the Officer concerned. It is recognised that a minimum of 10 hours CPD is required for food safety enforcement officers.

With the introduction of the FHS across Suffolk, consistency training was identified as a need and will be carried out in April and available for the majority of officers operating in Suffolk following the take up of FSA training by representative officers of the Suffolk authorities earlier in the year.

Other training planned includes: Remedial Action Notices training and the practical application of public health legislation.

6. QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW

6.1 The following monitoring arrangements are in place to assist in the quality assessment of the work being carried out:

- Peer review of post inspection paperwork
- Regular team meetings
- Annual performance review
- Use of customer satisfaction questionnaires
- Periodic consistency training events organised by the Suffolk Food Group

7. ACTION PLAN

- 7.1 Publicise the existence of this plan on the Councils' websites.
- 7.2 Undertake a food premises intervention programme in accordance with the requirement of the FSA Code of practices to protect the public.
- 7.3 Provide a web based application scheme for licences and registrations.
- 7.4 Continue to engage with the Food Standard Agency on promotion of food safety initiatives.
- 7.5 Continue to develop and publicise the FHRS.
- 7.6 Harmonisation of practices and procedures across Babergh and Mid Suffolk.
- 7.7 Introduction of flexible warranting of competent officers between the Suffolk district and borough councils as well as Suffolk Trading Standards if this is possible following negotiations between the authorities.
- 7.8 Review participation in local and national sampling programmes.
- 7.9 Work with Suffolk Trading Standards to improve co-ordination, resilience and maximisation of effect and well as finding ways of making visits to businesses more time efficient for both the regulatory authorities and the businesses themselves.
- 7.10 Establish improved support for small and medium sized food businesses in Babergh and Mid Suffolk in conjunction with other council services.

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Food and Safety Service Health and Safety Service Plan 2013/14

1. INTRODUCTION

The Health and Safety Service Plan is an expression of the Councils' continuing commitment to the Health and Safety Service. It covers the key areas of Health and Safety enforcement and the relevant management arrangements and targets against which Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils will monitor service delivery.

It has been compiled in accordance with the guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA). Under this Act local authorities are required to make adequate arrangements for the enforcement of health and safety in their areas.

Guidance issued under the provisions of Section 18 has a mandatory status. A duty is placed on all local authorities to produce a Service Plan for Health and Safety, which must include the investigation of accidents and complaints, as well as address the issues of service requests, advice for business, and routine inspections.

The service plan should be agreed by elected members and must make clear the arrangements for contributing to current HSE priorities. It will take into account local needs while addressing national priorities as set out by the HSE in its Strategic Plan.

The purpose of the service, with regards to health and safety is to work in partnership with businesses, the Health and Safety Executive, and other local authorities in Suffolk, to protect people's occupational health, safety and welfare. To achieve this the service will endeavour to ensure that risks in the workplace are properly and proportionally managed through targeted and risk based interventions, investigation of complaints, investigation of accidents and dangerous occurrences and through business support so that businesses are helped to sustainability and resilience through providing safe places to work.

2. KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The health and safety service contributes to the following emerging strategic priorities:

Babergh.

- Support and facilitate active, healthy and safe communities where people can thrive.
- Shape influence and provide the conditions to deliver growth whilst protecting and enhancing our environment.

Mid Suffolk.

- Encourage and support individuals and communities to be self sufficient, strong, healthy and safe.
- Lead and shape the local economy by promoting and helping to deliver sustainable economic growth.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A brief profile of the two districts

Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Councils run the length of central Suffolk between Essex and Norfolk. The administrative bases are in Needham Market and Hadleigh.

The districts cover an area of over 146,000 hectares, with a population of around 178,000 living in 199 parishes. The majority of the population live in villages. The principal towns are Stowmarket and Sudbury.

3.2 Organisational structure

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have a joint Management Team of six Heads of Service, three Directors and a Chief Executive. The Food and Safety service sits within the Environment service group of the Place Directorate. The Food and Safety service has a Corporate Manager reporting to the Head of Environment.

3.3 Scope of the health and safety service

The service may be split into two broad areas – Proactive and Reactive.

Proactive includes:

- Inspection of workplaces
- Campaigns to identify new workplaces or enforce the law
- Projects around specific high risk issues
- Enforcement of health and safety law
- Education of employers/employees and the general public

Reactive includes:

- Investigation of accidents
- Investigation of complaints
- Providing advice and information

The core health and safety service is provided directly by MSDC/Babergh employees but specialist contractors are used when specific technical accreditation is required (for example for gas safety issues), for short-term projects or where capacity is a problem.

3.4 Demands on the service unit

The premises for which Mid Suffolk and Babergh have regulatory responsibility can be categorised as follows:

Type of premises	Total number of premises known at 31/03/2013 Babergh	Total number of premises known at 31/03/2013 Mid Suffolk
Retail shops	363	306
Wholesale shops, warehouses and fuel storage depots	73	37
Offices	346	127
Catering, restaurants and bars	247	269
Hotels, camp sites and other short-stay accommodation	28	33
Residential care homes	36	26
Leisure and cultural services	100	158
Consumer services	337	219
Other premises (not classified above)	30	33
TOTAL	1,560	1,208

There are only a handful of these premises that will be visited as a result of a scheduled inspection as discussed in section 4 of this plan. The main demands placed on the service will be from a combination of responses to events such as accidents, complaints and business enquiries plus work on locally identified priorities such as catering gas safety, legionella and laser treatments.

In addition to premises based businesses, there are a number of public events and entertainments where the local authorities have health and safety regulatory responsibilities including Harvest at Jimmy's Farm Wherstead and the Symmetry Festival in Palgrave.

3.5 Enforcement policy

The two Councils have adopted a joint enforcement policy. All officers are expected to act in accordance with this policy which is freely available for inspection by the public and local businesses and is posted on the Councils' websites.

4 SERVICE DELIVERY

4.1 HSE guidance (LAC67/2) gives local authorities the following overarching principles regarding planning regulatory interventions:

LAs should decide, plan and target their health & safety interventions having regard to the range of interventions available, the risk profile of the business/sector, national information (accident statistics, national priorities, Primary/Lead Authority inspection plans) and local knowledge and priorities.

LAs should reserve unannounced proactive inspections for Category 'A' premises and where intelligence suggests that risks are not being effectively managed. Lower risk premises (Category C) are considered to be only suitable for reactive interventions in response to an accident or complaint. A wider range of regulatory interventions (non-inspection techniques) should be used for other categories of premises (B1 and B2). In keeping with the Government's reforms of health and safety, there are no restrictions on reactive work but LAs should consider using HSE's Incident Selection Criteria and risk based approach to complaints handling to assist with targeting their resources.

This guidance also gives the following national priority topic areas for intervention strategies:

- Legionella
- Asbestos
- Visitor Attractions – animal contacts

4.2 At the time of writing this service plan, the HSE is consulting local authorities on proposals for a national local authority enforcement code. In essence the proposals seek to formulate and formalise much of the current fashionable drive to a regulatory light touch. The consultation includes the obvious recommendation that local authorities have risk-based intervention plans, which this plan seeks to be, but also direction on which activities and sectors should be the subject for proactive inspection by local authorities as follows:

No	Hazards	High Risk Sectors	High Risk Activities
1	Legionella infection	Premises with cooling towers/evaporative condensers	Lack of suitable legionella control measures
2	Explosion caused by leaking LPG	Premises (including caravan parks) with buried metal LPG pipework	Buried metal LPG pipe work for caravan parks (to communal/amenity blocks only)
3	E.coli/cryptosporidium infection esp. in children	Open Farms/Animal Visitor Attractions	Lack of suitable micro-organism control measures
4	Fatalities/injuries resulting from being struck by vehicles	Tyre fitters*/ MVR* (as part of Car Sales) High volume Warehousing/Distribution	Use of two-post vehicle lifts Workplace transport
5	Fatalities/injuries resulting from falls from height/ amputation and crushing injuries	Industrial retail/wholesale premises e.g. steel stockholders, builders/timber merchants	Workplace transport/work at height/cutting machinery /lifting equipment.
6	Industrial diseases (occupational asthma/deafness)	MVR* Industrial retail/wholesale premises e.g. steel stockholders, builders/timber merchants	Use of Isocyanate paints Noise and dust.
7	Falls from height	High volume Warehousing/Distribution	Work at height
8	Crowd control & injuries/fatalities to the public	Large scale public events/sports/leisure facilities e.g. motorised leisure pursuits including off road vehicles and track days	Inadequate consideration of public safety e.g. poor organisation and/or supervision of high speed or off-road vehicle movements
9	Carbon monoxide poisoning and gas explosion	Commercial catering premises using solid fuel cooking equipment	Lack of suitable ventilation and/or unsafe appliances.

No	Hazards	High Risk Sectors	High Risk Activities
10	Violence at work	Premises with vulnerable working conditions (lone/night working/cash handling e.g. betting shops/off licences/care settings.	Lack of suitable security measures/procedures

4.3 Interventions

Local priorities are still to be fully determined, but the emerging issues for the region are legionella in care homes, gas safety in catering establishments and use of lasers in the beauty industry.

4.4 Health and Safety Campaigns

To fulfil the Councils' obligation to achieve the HSE's goals Babergh and MSDC will continue to take part in national and regional campaigns in addition to locally identified campaigns.

The campaigns in 2013/14 are likely to focus on:

- Legionella
- Asbestos – Duty to Manage
- Visitor Attractions – animal contact

4.5 Accident Investigations

The law requires employers to report certain types of work related accidents, diseases or dangerous occurrences. Officers will investigate the most serious of these incidents to establish if health and safety law has been broken and also with the aim of preventing similar accidents from occurring and taking any appropriate enforcement action. A reactive intervention approach, using the Incident Selection Criteria (LAC 22/13) has been instigated since October 2009 and revised in 2011.

Number of injuries and investigations 01.04.12 to 31.03.13

Severity of Injury	Injuries reportable under RIDDOR			
	Status of injured person			
	Employed	Public	Any Other Person	Total
Fatal injuries			1	1
Non-fatal injuries	27	17	25	69
Dangerous Occurrences	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	27	17	26	70
Of which the local authorities investigated	4	6	4	14

4.6 Complaints

Complaints from the public and employees concerning unsafe practices, poor working environment, excessive working hours and poor facilities e.g. toilet provision, are investigated. We have a range of legal powers to ensure the necessary improvements are made although it is our stated aim to work, wherever possible, with all parties concerned to achieve these objectives without having to take formal action.

Number of requests for health and safety service received (e.g. complaints about health and safety standards in a workplace; requests for information/advice) and complaints against the service 01.04.12 to 31.03.13

	No. of requests for health and safety service received by LA	Complaints against the service provided by LA
Total Number	66	0
Of which the LA investigated (e.g. visits, oral/written communication)	62	0

4.7 Advice to Businesses

Officers are committed to building positive working relationships with business proprietors and work with them to help them comply with the law and to improve health and safety standards. Information is held on and signposted from the Councils' websites. There is also a comprehensive library of information sheets and leaflets many of which are distributed free of charge. Both new and existing businesses are encouraged to contact the service for advice.

4.8 Event Safety Advisory Group

The Food and Safety service contribute health and safety expertise to the Suffolk Event Safety Advisory Group (SESAG). The purpose of this group is to ensure a co-ordinated approach to crowd and spectator safety and wellbeing is developed for events organised in the Suffolk area.

4.9 Home authority and primary authority principles

The Council supports the Home Authority Principle and will provide advice to businesses if it acts as the Home Authority. Officers have regard to information that they receive from any liaison with Home Authorities and where advice has been received, the relevant Authority will be kept informed of actions taken by this Council.

The Council acknowledges the primary authority system and appropriate adjustments are made to the way in which interventions are made when businesses have paid for a primary authority arrangement.

5. RESOURCES

5.1 Financial

At the time of drafting, the service budget allocated to the health and safety element of the food and safety service for 2013/14 had yet to be finalised as it is tied to the current staff consultation process for the structure of the new joint team. The budget will be finalised following the end of the consultation period and appointment of staff to the new team.

5.2 Staffing allocation

For 2013/14 the Food and Safety service establishment is:



The main work areas of the service unit are in relation to food safety, occupational health and safety, infectious diseases, private water supplies, health promotion and some licensing regulatory functions.

The full time equivalent staffing allocation to Health and Safety law related matters in the establishment structure is as follows: 1.00 Senior Food and Safety Officers; 0.75 Food and Safety Officers; 0.25 Technical Support Officers.

5.3 Staff Development

Training needs will be determined in an ongoing way and as part of the annual appraisal process and include in-house and external training opportunities. Appraisal records will be personal to the Officer concerned. The Regulators' Development Needs Analysis (RDNA) assessment tool will be used.

6 QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW

6.1 The following monitoring arrangements are in place to assist in the quality assessment of the work being carried out:

- Review by the Corporate Manager of recorded work
- Regular team meetings
- Annual performance review
- Use of customer satisfaction questionnaires
- Periodic consistency training events organised by the Suffolk Health and Safety Group

7 ACTION PLAN

- 7.1 Publicise the existence of this plan on the Councils' websites.
- 7.2 Undertake an intervention programme in accordance with the requirements of HSE guidance LAC67/2 to protect people in the workplace and the public.
- 7.3 Provide a web based application scheme for licences and registrations.
- 7.4 Continue to engage with the HSE and other Suffolk local authorities on promotion of health and safety initiatives and interventions.
- 7.5 Harmonisation of practices and procedures across Babergh and Mid Suffolk.
- 7.6 Introduction of flexible warranting of competent officers between the Suffolk district and borough councils.
- 7.7 Work with Suffolk Trading Standards to improve co-ordination, resilience and synergies of effort and well as finding ways of making visits to businesses more time efficient for both the regulatory authorities and the businesses themselves.
- 7.8 Establish improved support for small and medium sized food businesses in Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

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