

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL and MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Head of Environment	Report Number: P12
To: Strategy Committee Executive Committee	Date of meeting: 8 May 2014 12 May 2014

Mid Suffolk and Babergh Food Safety and Health and Safety Service Plans 2014/15

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 2014/15.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the joint Mid Suffolk and Babergh Food Safety and Health and Safety Service Plans for 2014/15 be approved.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The proposed plans are in line with the 2014/15 budget identified for the Food and Safety team.

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

- 6.1 Equality analysis screening was been carried out for the 2013/14 service plans. The structure of the 2014/15 plans do not deviate significantly from the previous year. The conclusion from earlier screening was that the proposed service plans do not impact either positively or negatively in terms of the elimination of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

7. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

- 7.1 The two service plans are written for a fully integrated service operating across Babergh and Mid Suffolk where the identified resources are intended to be utilised equally in both districts.

7.2 Reference is made, in the plans, to the continued development of working arrangements between the Suffolk 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. The joint warranting arrangements of district and county officers for food safety and health and safety work and work around the introduction of impending regulations relating to allergens are specific examples of this.

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.

9. Appendices

Title	Location
1. Food and Safety Service, Food Safety Service Plan 2014/15	Attached
2. Food and Safety Service, Health and Safety Service Plan 2014/15	Attached

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>

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Food and Safety Service Food Safety Service Plan 2014/15

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, 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 aligned strategic priorities:

- Lead and shape the local economy by promoting and helping to deliver sustainable economic growth which is balanced with respect for wildlife, heritage and the natural and built environment.
- Shape, influence and provide the leadership to enable growth whilst protecting and enhancing our environment.
- Encourage and support individuals and communities to be self sufficient, strong, healthy and safe.
- Shape, influence and provide the leadership to support and facilitate active, healthy and safe communities.

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
- The dissemination of food safety information to the public
- Working with schools to improve food safety in the home

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 2014/15, 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	15	30
B	12 monthly	84	84
C	18 monthly	572	249
D	24 monthly	341	122
E	36 monthly	1161	338
Outside scope and unrated		64	N/A
Total		2,237	823

There are a total of 2,237 food premises recorded on the Babergh/Mid Suffolk database (an increase of 297 during 2013/14) 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 service will have carried out 1,373 routine or initial food safety interventions from the period 1 April 2013 to the 31 March 2014 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 is 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 2013/14 the emphasis has continued to be 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. In 2013/14 with the impending introduction of new regulations relating to customer information on allergens (December 2014) it is anticipated a significant element of food hygiene visits will be on the subject of allergens and how businesses deliver information to consumers about allergens.

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 lower 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:

2009	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
79%	86%	86%	84%	7%	92.5%

One objective of the Food Safety service is to increase the percentage of food businesses achieving broad compliance. The introduction of quite onerous requirements relating to E. coli and cross contamination of raw and ready to eat foods two years ago has meant that businesses that were broadly compliant will have slipped a little in the way they were judged. The 2012/13 figure however, is not currently available. With the transfer of Mid Suffolk data to M3, an overall year-end figure was not extracted and the percentage the system has now produced is clearly out of kilter with the previous and subsequent years (showing 72%). The impact of E. coli requirements may account for something of a dip in the percentage of broadly compliant businesses but it seems unlikely to be as severe as the figure the system is giving. The 2013/14 figure of 92.5% suggests a significant overall improvement on all previous years and the service will look to build on this.

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 2013/2014 there were 46 food complaints and 58 food premises complaints, these relatively low numbers are an indication of the good levels of general compliance that the food and safety service has 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 provide advice to businesses where they act as the Home or Originating Authority. Officers have regard to information that they receive from any liaison with Home/Organising 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 a comprehensive library of information sheets and leaflets which are distributed free of charge although increasingly officers will point businesses at web based resources, particularly those of the FSA. Both new and existing businesses are encouraged to contact the service for advice. In 2013/2014 there were more than 257 food advice requests, many of the requests related to the starting up of small independent businesses. This compares with 230 in 2012/13 and suggests an increase in food business activity.

With overall process of integrating services now largely complete across the whole organisation, in 2014/15 the food safety service will work with other services, particularly other regulatory services, to improve the way it helps businesses start up and develop in the Mid Suffolk and Babergh areas.

4.5 Training for Food Handlers

The service continues to offer a minimum of four level two 'award in food safety in catering' food hygiene training.

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 districts, identifying the 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 service achieved a smooth transition between the previous scores on the doors rating system and the FHRS. There are businesses not included in the new national scheme that previously would have had a rating under scores on the doors, notably manufacturers, and some of those businesses have expressed disappointment at this. Generally, however, the scheme appears to continue to create an environment where, due to the public nature of the ratings, there is a desire for improvement. During 2014/15 further promotional work for the FHRS will be carried out to ensure that increasingly the scheme becomes something that consumers consider when buying food and eating out.

4.7 Food inspection and sampling

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

Food samples are 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 Councils participate in a regional sampling programme, coordinated by the Health Protection Agency, across Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire. Regional studies (contributing to national studies) provide intelligence that can identify what the focus of food safety visits to businesses should be.

In 2013/14 the regional sampling studies have been:

- Microbiological quality of pre-packed sandwiches with an emphasis on Listeria.
- Microbiological quality of ready to eat herbs.
- Microbiological standards of food from local producers.

For 2014/15 the programme will continue to include local producers including butchers, pate and cheese makers, bakers, sandwich producers, ice cream. We are awaiting the details of the wider studies.

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 Public Health England. 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 Consultants in Communicable Disease Control at the Public Health England. 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 Giri Shankar - CCDC
Dr Bernadette Nazareth - CCDC
Dr Kate King - Public Health Protection Medical Specialist
Dr Abina Varadarajan - CCDC

The total numbers of infectious disease notifications for 2013/14 were 362.

A Suffolk wide training exercise for the investigation of food borne infectious diseases is being planned by the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Food and Safety service in conjunction with Public Health England for the summer of 2014.

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.

48 Food Alerts were received from the FSA in 2013/2014. None were found to have major implications for Mid Suffolk or Babergh.

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 in recent years, resilience has been adversely affected. An initiative taken to counter the likely problems that would occur if there were a major problem has been 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. There has been a significant delay to this due to legal deliberations but the agreement should be in place early in the financial year 2014/15.

In England, there is to be increased responsibility for catering businesses to provide consumers with information about allergens. With the new regulations coming into effect in December 2014, the Food and Safety service is working closely with the Suffolk Trading Standards service to provide advance information to businesses. It is expected that this will change the emphasis of many of the routine inspection visits made during 2014 and through to 2015. The district councils will have powers to enforce the new regulations whilst the County Council will have a duty to enforce.

4.11 Food safety promotion

Promotional activities are usually carried out in support of national food safety week. In 2013, FSA materials were used to promote safe food on a budget using social media and the council websites. This was lower key than usual due to the disruption of the integration process and the late publication of materials by the FSA. The food safety service will support food safety week activities again in 2014 which is to be about the safe handling of raw poultry and the risks of Campylobacter.

Mission Possible, the well-received project designed to teach food hygiene to Key Stage 2 pupils and their families, has continued to be run in the Mid Suffolk area and it is intended that in 2013/14 it will further extend into the Babergh area now that schools have been contacted. Materials relating to healthy eating and allergens have been developed by the Food and Safety team and added to the packs provided to the schools. These have been piloted with a few schools and once initial feedback has been evaluated, it is intended these elements of the project will be finalised and cascade out to all participating schools.

5. RESOURCES

5.1 Financial

Final budget details were not available when this service plan was being drafted. Staffing costs are the most significant element (approximately 90%). The service is considered to be split 50/50 between Babergh and Mid Suffolk with very similar level of service demand and numbers of relevant business premises.

5.2 Staffing allocation

For 2014/15 the Food and Safety service establishment is:



The main work areas of the service 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 to maintain competence and validate their continued use of delegated enforcement powers.

With the introduction of the FHRs across Suffolk, consistency training was carried out in April 2013 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 carried out by members of the team in relation to food safety included the practical application of public health legislation, imported foods, infectious disease investigation, sous vide and allergens.

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 inspections and post inspection records
- 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 Continue to engage with the Food Standard Agency on promotion of food safety initiatives.
- 7.4 Continue to develop and publicise the FHRS.
- 7.5 Introduction of flexible warranting of competent officers between the Suffolk district and borough councils as well as Suffolk Trading Standards.
- 7.6 Participation in local and national sampling programmes.
- 7.7 Work with Suffolk Trading Standards to improve co-ordination, resilience and maximisation of use 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 in conjunction with other council services.

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Food and Safety Service Health and Safety Service Plan 2014/15

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 aligned strategic priorities:

- Lead and shape the local economy by promoting and helping to deliver sustainable economic growth which is balanced with respect for wildlife, heritage and the natural and built environment.
- Shape, influence and provide the leadership to enable growth whilst protecting and enhancing our environment.
- Encourage and support individuals and communities to be self sufficient, strong, healthy and safe.
- Shape, influence and provide the leadership to support and facilitate active, healthy and safe communities.

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 and inform new
- 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) or 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 31/03/2014 Babergh	Total number of premises known at 31/03/2014 Mid Suffolk
Retail shops	357	304
Wholesale shops, warehouses and fuel storage depots	73	37
Offices	344	126
Catering, restaurants and bars	233	262
Hotels, camp sites and other short-stay accommodation	29	33
Residential care homes	36	27
Leisure and cultural services	99	154
Consumer services	333	219
Other premises (not classified above)	30	34
TOTAL	1,534	1,196

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.

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 principle regarding planning regulatory interventions:

LAs should use the range of techniques (interventions) available to increase their impact and reach to influence behaviours and improve the management of risk. LAs should decide, plan and target their health & safety interventions based on the outcomes and priorities that they are trying to address.

4.2 In May 2013 HSE published the National Local Authority Enforcement Code (the Code). The Code was developed in response to the recommendation in "Reclaiming health & safety for all: an independent review of health & safety legislation" by Professor Ragnar Löfstedt for HSE to be given a stronger role in directing Local Authority (LA) health & safety inspection and enforcement activity and as an outcome of the Red Tape Challenge on health and safety.

4.3 The code advises that LAs should achieve targeting interventions on those activities that give rise to the most serious risks or where the hazards are least well controlled and do this by:

- Having risk-based intervention plans focussed on tackling specific risks;
- Considering the risks that they need to address and using the whole range of interventions to target these specific risks;
- Reserving unannounced proactive inspection only for the activities and sectors published by HSE or where intelligence suggests risks are not being effectively managed; and
- Using national and local intelligence to inform priorities.

4.4 LAC 67/2 provides the following list of activities/sectors for proactive inspection by LAs, stating only activities falling within these sectors or types of organisation should be subject to proactive inspection:

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.
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

4.5 Interventions

As is clear from the above, there are severe constraints as to the interventions that the local authorities are permitted to make and few proactive inspections are now made.

Continuing local priority issues are legionella in care homes where a programme of checks is being made in conjunction with food safety visits and gas safety in catering establishments for which a campaign is planned on the back of a number of serious problems found during routine food safety visits.

There were fewer proactive intervention visits in 2013/14 than 2012/13, 34 compared to 44 but an increase in the service of enforcement notices, 9 compared to 7.

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 issues.

The campaigns in 2014/15 are likely to focus on:

- Gas safety in catering premises
- Rating system for skin piercing businesses

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 2012. From LAC 22/13 incidents should be selected for investigation with consideration of HSE's Enforcement Policy Statement (EPS). LAs will, in accordance with their duty under Section 18, allocate sufficient time and resources to investigate accidents, dangerous occurrences and causes of occupational ill health. When deciding which incidents to investigate and the level of resource to be allocated to the investigation, account should be taken of the:

- severity and scale of potential or actual harm;
- seriousness of any potential breach of the law;
- duty holder's known past health and safety performance;
- enforcement priorities;
- practicality of achieving results; and
- wider relevance of the event, including serious public concern

as well as the national guidance on targeting interventions.

Number of injuries and investigations 01.04.13 to 31.03.14

<i>Severity of Injury</i>	<i>Injuries reportable under RIDDOR</i>			
	Status of injured person			
	Employed	Public	Any Other Person	Total
Fatal injuries			0	0
Non-fatal injuries	30	32	16	78
Dangerous Occurrences	0	0	1	1
TOTALS	30	32	17	79
Of which the local authorities investigated	2	8	3	13

The total number of reported injuries increased from 70 in 2012/13 to 79 and the increase related to reports about injuries to the public. The national guidance has tended to push down the numbers reported but with the low numbers involved here it would be wrong to interpret the increase as a trend. The general push from central government to reign back on health and safety regulation could be a factor so it is probably worth keeping an eye on whether reported injuries in the two districts continue to rise.

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 01.04.13 to 31.03.14

	No. of requests for health and safety service received by LA	Complaints against the service provided by LA
Total Number	52	0
Of which the LA investigated (e.g. visits, oral/written communication)	38	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.

The food and safety service is currently engaged with the development of a corporate approach to business support and a major strand of the development of the service in 2014/15 will be how the regulatory services of Mid Suffolk and Babergh can simplify and improve access to support for businesses.

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

Final budget details were not available when this service plan was being drafted. Staffing costs are the most significant element (approximately 90%). The service is considered to be split 50/50 between Babergh and Mid Suffolk with very similar level of service demand and numbers of relevant business premises.

5.2 Staffing allocation

For 2014/15 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

During 2013/14 training has been carried out by members of the team in the following areas:

- Legionella
- Fairground safety
- Skin piercing
- Zoonoses from domestic animals

Two members of the team are currently undertaking NEBOSH (National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health) diplomas in health and safety on day release to improve the resilience of the service.

General training needs will continue to 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
- Individual performance review
- Use of customer satisfaction questionnaires
- Periodic consistency training events organised by the Suffolk Health and Safety Group

6.2 During 2013/14, with the fuller integration of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Food and Safety services, a significant amount of consolidation and team development has been achieved. Major interventions have included the following:

- The identification of a life threatening gas safety issue in a restaurant/takeaway kitchen resulting in the service of notices and the need for emergency work.
- Prosecution of the owner of a cafe in relation to an accident involving a caustic chemical and eye injury.
- Serious electrical safety issues identified in a hotel resulting in the service of notices and the need for extensive remedial work.

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 and the National Local Authority Enforcement Code to protect people in the workplace and the public.
- 7.3 Develop web based advice and single point of contact approach for new businesses.
- 7.4 Continue to engage with the HSE and other Suffolk local authorities on promotion of health and safety initiatives and interventions.
- 7.5 Introduction of flexible warranting of competent officers between the Suffolk district and borough councils.