

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET – 4 JUNE 2019

Recommendation from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 12 March 2019:-

66 FOOD SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2019/20

The report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) set out the Food Safety Service Delivery Plan for 2019/20 (in Appendix A) for consideration by the Committee.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) had overall responsibility for the official control of food law enforcement in England. It was a requirement of the FSA that local authorities produce a Food Safety Service Plan which was approved by Members.

Local authorities were expected to not only undertake “routine hygiene inspections” but to operate a risk based enforcement system that valued educational initiatives along with formal legal enforcement and other interventions such as targeted sampling.

There were no significant changes to how the service was going to be delivered.

The number of premises in all risk categories were reduced for the coming year and the Chairman congratulated the team on their work.

The following points were raised and discussed:

- Officers agreed that the team needed to improve their record keeping so that they could report accurately on the number of staff working on food law enforcement.
- The number of Food Hygiene Requests (FHRs) had decreased to nine in 2018/19 compared to 28 during 2017/18. Members questioned whether the charge of £180 per requested visit be reduced. The charge was introduced in April 2018 and had reduced the number of FHRs. Officers confirmed that the fee was a cost recovery charge for businesses, arrived at by using a formulae from central government and was listed with the Council’s fees and charges. The level of the fee also discouraged businesses with low ratings requesting another visit without doing any remedial work. A sliding scale was put forward however the Executive Member Governance and Public Health said that it could be potentially confusing and hard to administer.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee consider and approve the Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2019/20, in Appendix A, and recommend to Cabinet that it is sent to Council to be adopted.