

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 4 APRIL 2017  
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (PUBLIC PROTECTION, PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE)

**HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2017/18**

**1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 Good health and safety compliance in businesses is of key importance to a maintaining the borough's local economy. This report sets out the Council's Health & Safety service plan for 2017/18 outlining both our commitment to the national strategy and the arrangements we have in place to deliver proactive and reactive interventions.
- 1.2 Preventing harm to employees and the public is integral to businesses being successful and achieving sustained growth. In addition being in work is essential for public health. Accidents at work have costs for the individual, their family, the employer and the wider economy including the NHS.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 For the committee to note the content and recommend to Cabinet that it is sent to the Council to be adopted.

**3 Explanation**

- 3.1 Public Health & Protection is responsible for health & safety enforcement, education, advice and intervention in sector specific workplaces throughout the Borough.
- 3.2 The service is required to produce and make available an annual health and safety service plan that is agreed by their elected members and makes clear their arrangements for contributing to current Health & Safety Executive (HSE) identified national priorities. This is a requirement specified within the guidance issued by the HSE under section 18 of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 that is mandatory for the service to comply with.

**4 Legal Implication(s)**

- 4.1 There is a requirement for the Council to provide a service plan in accordance with HSE's section 18 guidance.
- 4.2 Failure to provide the service plan and/or comply with the section 18 standard leads to the risk of public naming and shaming, damage to reputation, harm to local business and risks to employees and the public using premises in Welwyn Hatfield through an unplanned prioritisation of service provision.

## **5 Financial Implication(s)**

- 5.1 None directly arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are significant financial risks for businesses not complying with health & safety legislation both in operational costs but also the risk of prosecution.

## **6 Risk Management Implications**

- 6.1 The main risks related to this proposal are:
- 6.2 The Council is at risk from criticism from central government if it does not prepare and deliver a health & safety service plan in accordance with the legal requirements of section 18.
- 6.3 Employees and other persons affected by local businesses are at risk if we do not take adequate steps to proactively enforce health & safety legislation.
- 6.4 Our work with local business, especially small and medium sized enterprises helps the local economy and business growth, thereby mitigating associated risks.
- 6.5 The work of the public health and protection service is considerably broad with the underlying theme of protecting the public. Therefore it is inevitable that in order to make best use of resources some work will be prioritised over other work. Sometimes the priorities afforded to work by officers using their professional judgement may not match the perceived priorities allocated by members of the public, and this mismatch may result in complaints to local councillors, MPs and the Ombudsman.

## **7 Security & Terrorism Implication(s)**

- 7.1 Workplace safety is a control mechanism that can be used to reduce the risk or at least minimise the impact of a terrorism incident. Within health & safety legislation that the Council enforces there are requirements to carry out risk assessments, co-operate and co-ordinate safety arrangements, ensure adequate training, information and equipment for employees and to put proper procedures and staff in place to deal with imminent and serious danger.
- 7.2 The delivery of some health & safety interventions may seek to improve the security arrangements in place in workplaces in the borough.

## **8 Procurement Implication(s)**

- 8.1 There are no procurement implications.

## **Climate Change Implication(s)**

- 8.2 None directly arising from this report.

## **9 Link to Corporate Priorities**

- 9.1 The subject of this report is linked to the Council's Corporate Priorities "maintain a safe and healthy community", "protect and enhance the environment", "help

build a strong local economy”, “engage with our communities and provide value for money”.

## **10 Equality and Diversity**

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out in connection with this service plan.

Name of author	Cheryll Brown
Title	Team Leader (Public Health and Protection)
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