
FOOD CONTROL LAW ENFORCEMENT PLAN 2023-2025

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council, as a statutory food authority under the Food Safety Act 1990 and associated statutes, must ensure that it delivers, principally through environmental health, a service which is adequately resourced to meet the requirements of a national Code of Practice (hereafter referred to as FLCOP) issued by Food Standards Scotland (hereafter referred to as FSS). The FLCOP also requires food authorities to have a formal food control law enforcement plan approved by the appropriate Committee.
- 1.2 Our aims are to protect public health and promote the production of safe food onto the market. The food and drink sector is significant to the economy and reputation of Argyll and Bute, and regulation seeks to support compliant businesses and target non-compliant businesses. Notwithstanding this, the Council have a statutory responsibility to deliver a service which meets the requirements of FLCOP.
- 1.3 The Planning, Protective Services and Planning Committee approved the [Regulatory Services Work Plan 2023-25](#) on the 21 June 2023. This overarching plan covered the wide range of priorities across Regulatory Services, included the statutory food control enforcement role carried out by environmental health. The Food Control Law Enforcement Plan 2023-25 provides more detail

1.4 Recommendations

- 1.4.1 Members are asked to recognise the work by environmental health to protect food safety in Argyll and Bute.
- 1.4.2 Members are asked to approve the Food Control Law Enforcement Plan 2023-25 and reaffirm the statutory appointments of the Council's Head of Food Safety, Lead Officer (Food Control) together with the

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**PPSL COMMITTEE
18 OCTOBER 2023**

FOOD CONTROL

4.2 The requirements for a Council's food safety regulation activities are detailed in the Food Standards Agency Code of Practice and Framework Agreement. They prescribe full compliance with the Code and their expectations, including inspection frequencies for food business operators. The Council do not have sufficient resource to meet the full extent of the Code and from an operation management perspective; we target our resources on areas of greatest risk, at the expense of low risk activities.

purposes of identifying how current resources can be most effectively deployed to address national and local priorities, to restore resources in the longer term, to revise the FLCOP and protect food safety and standards most effectively in the future.

- 5.5 Export market. An indirect consequence of EU Exit has been the need for export business to remodel their processes to meet increasing demands for exporting to the EU. As a consequence, many of the large companies are directing consignment through commercial hubs, rather than requesting export health certificates from their local authorities. As a result, the number of export health certificate requests has reduced by 60% in Argyll and Bute, with a subsequent reduction in income.

6.0 **FOOD CONTROL LAW ENFORCEMENT PLAN 2023-25**

- 6.1 The service does not have sufficient budget to provide the resources required to meet the key requirements of the FLCOP and the food safety challenges in Argyll and Bute. This situation is exacerbated by the national shortage of environmental health officer and food safety officers.

The 2023-25 work plan has been developed to minimise the risks

7.2 The Food Control Law Enforcement Policy has been reviewed and is presented for approval. It meets the requirements of the National Code, the *Scottish regulators' strategic code of practice* and the Council's Enforcement Policy. There are no changes to the policy previously approved by Committee.

8.0 **CONCLUSIONS**

8.1 The role of Environmental Health is critical in protecting public health, supporting compliant businesses, targeting and enforcing non-compliance, addressing food safety risks and supporting the economy of Argyll and Bute. Much of this work goes unrecognised, and only comes to the fore when there are incidents, food poisoning outbreaks, such as outbreaks of E.coli 0157, Listeria (it is noteworthy that the Council is currently involved in investigating a nationwide outbreak) and export demands where business viability

