

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

Equality Impact Assessment

Title of Policy/Service/Contract: Food and Health and Safety Services and their enforcement

Division: Housing, Environmental Health and Building Control

Lead Officer: Yvonne Leddy

Date Assessment completed: October 2012

1. SCOPING

1.1 What are the aims of the policy, service/service change or contract?

Food Safety

- To safeguard the people who live, work or travel through the Mid Sussex district by ensuring that all food and drink produced, imported, prepared or sold within the district is safe and wholesome to eat.
- To enforce food safety legislation in accordance with the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy in a way which is necessary and proportionate; consistent; transparent and targeted.
- To prevent and control the spread of poisoning and food borne diseases.
- To contribute towards health improvement targets in relation to diet, obesity and coronary heart disease.
- To carry out inspections of food premises, to monitor compliance with relevant food safety legislation and operate the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.
- To respond to food alerts issued by the FSA, in respect of food hazards and incidents.
- To investigate notifications and outbreaks of food poisoning and food borne disease in accordance with the council' procedures and the Health Protection Agency (HPA) "Major Outbreak Plan", and to take such measures as are necessary to prevent the spread of disease
- To enforce smokefree legislation across the District.
- Registration of skin piercers, tattooists, acupuncturists, electrolysisists.

Health and safety

- To secure compliance with Health & Safety Legislation throughout business premises in the District where the Council is the Enforcing Authority.
- To protect the health, safety and welfare of people who work, live in, or visit, the District, in relation to work activities enforced by the Council by continuing to secure improvements in the working environment and by promoting the health of the population.
- To select premises where we can have the most impact and to carry out proactive health and safety inspections of workplaces.
- To investigate workplace accidents.
- To respond to requests for service (complaints) by employees and others against allegation of health and safety failures.

1.2 Who does the service/policy/contract affect? Who are the main customers (internal or external)?

All residents, businesses and visitors to the District.

1.3 What equality information is available, including any evidence from engagement and analysis of use of services?

Evidence comes from feedback from field officers. Work has previously been undertaken with a company called Sompriti to provide food hygiene training to ethnic catering businesses in their own language. This has provided information about the specific needs of businesses from the BME community. Safer Food Better Business training courses are currently delivered in English, but exams can be carried out in the applicant's preferred language.

1.4 What does this information tell us about the equality issues associated with the service and implications for the protected groups?

There are a large number of food premises in Mid Sussex that are run by people from BME groups, where English may not be their first language. This brings a requirement for Food Hygiene training in different languages and the need for translation services with written information in accessible formats.

1.5 Are contractors or partnerships used to deliver the service? Y/N Yes

If No go to section 2.

If yes, please refer to the guidance notes, particularly Appendix One of the MSDC Guidance "Integrating Equality and Diversity into Procurement", and complete the next three questions.

Identify the contractors/partnerships used to deliver the service.

Contractors are sometimes used to carry out Food and Health and Safety inspections.

What is their contribution to equality in service delivery and the promotion of equality?

They provide the service in the same way as the Council's directly employed inspection staff and their inspections are monitored.

How are equality issues addressed through contractual arrangements and service level agreements?

Contractors sign a Mid Sussex District Council contract and are required to undertake the work in accordance with our enforcement policy, internal inspections and procedures, LACORS guidance, Food Safety – Code of Practice and Practice Guidance.

2. Assessment of Impact; Analysis and Action Planning

Any gaps in information or provision, opportunities to promote equalities and good relations identified above need to be translated into SMART actions and recorded here. These actions need to be delivered and monitored through the service planning process.

Opportunity to promote equality, good relations and/or address barriers to service/differential impact	Current action taken to address these	Further actions required and timescales	Lead Officer	How will impact be measured
The needs of different ethnic groups including white minorities, but also established white communities				
<p>Levels of awareness of the requirements of legislation can be lower in some minority groups. As a result, people from some minority groups may face a disproportionate level of enforcement action.</p> <p>Language and literacy may also exacerbate this problem but information leaflets and translation services are available.</p>	<p>The enforcement policy seeks to ensure that enforcement activities are consistent, proportionate, transparent, and targeted in accordance with the Enforcement Concordat.</p> <p>Information leaflets are in English but on the back of each leaflet is a short passage in Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese, Chinese and Bengali advising on how translations can be requested.</p> <p>All letters go out in English unless we are aware that the recipient does not speak English or does not have access to a friend / relative who can translate for them. Use of interpreting service during formal interviews as required under PACE.</p> <p>The food safety training courses are provided in English, but exams can be carried out in the applicant's preferred language or we advise them on alternative courses in London.</p>	None identified.		
The needs of men and women. Including taking account of pregnancy and maternity.				
None identified.	Not applicable.			
The needs of disabled people				
None identified.	Not applicable.			

Opportunity to promote equality and/or barriers to service/differential impact	Current action taken to address these	Further actions required and timescales	Lead Officer	How will impact be measured
The needs of people with a religion or belief				
Officers need to have a wide knowledge of diverse cultures domestically and commercially within the District. This includes knowledge and respect of different religions and faiths that we come into contact with on a day-to-day basis. E.g. knowledge of slaughterhouse rituals and types of foods consumed by different ethnic groups, living arrangements typical of different cultures.	Officers are introduced to different food handling practices during their training courses.			
The needs of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and heterosexual people				
None identified.				
Issues from marriage and civil partnership				
None identified.				
The needs of different age groups, for example older and younger people				
None identified.				
The needs of transgender communities				
None identified.				
The needs of people who are disadvantaged by socio-economic factors such as low incomes, skill or living in a deprived area				
Potential literacy problems. Access to most regulatory services is free, but there are licensing fees for some services.	Officers will explain the requirements. Food hygiene ratings are designed to be displayed in an easily understandable format.	None identified.		
The needs of people who live in a rural area				
Getting information to those in rural areas.	Use of web site and officers provide visits to businesses. Food Hygiene Ratings are available through the Council's website.	None identified.		

3. Mid Sussex District Council Equality Impact Assessment Summary

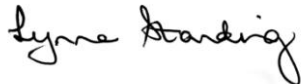
Key Findings	Future Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high proportion of the owners of food premises in Mid Sussex come from BME groups. Language and literacy issues may mean that people from these groups face a disproportionate level of enforcement action. The availability of translation services is promoted in our literature. The training programme on Safer Food and Better Business is designed to improve hygiene standards and reduce the likelihood of enforcement action. Applicants are able to carry out exams in their preferred language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current action to address these issues is believed to be sufficient and there are no future actions identified at this stage.

4. Signing off this assessment and action plan



Signature
 Person undertaking the assessment

Date 3rd December 2012



Signature
 Head of Service

Date ...3.12.12.....

Please send your completed impact assessment to Neal Barton for publication on the website.