

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	To defer all food standards and feed hygiene visits from 18 April until 17 July 2020
Date of decision:	14 May 2020
Decision maker:	Director for Economy and Place
Authority for delegated decision:	This is an emergency decision taken with regard to Part 3 Section 7 para 3.7.9 of the constitution
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	Chief finance officer, county solicitor, legal officers, Assistant Director for Regulatory Environment and Waste, Trading Standards Service Manager, Food Standards Agency
Decision made:	To defer all food standards and feed hygiene visits subject to the listed exceptions listed below from 18 April until 17 July 2020 as per the letter dated 17 April 2020 from Food Standards Agency
Reasons for decision:	<p>The Food Standards Agency has sent a communication to all authorities after obtaining approval from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health, Jo Churchill, to permit deviations from the direction given to local authorities in the Food Law Code of Practice (England) and the Feed Law Code of Practice (England) – the Codes.</p> <p>The permitted deviations are time bound for a period of up to 12 weeks from 18 April 2020 (to 17 July 2020).</p> <p>The permitted deviations to the Codes will help minimise regulatory footfall in business establishments and enable local authorities to divert potentially diminished resources to urgent reactive work and other wider public health actions required locally during the COVID-19 pandemic. They take account of central government advice on COVID-19 and aim to ensure food safety and the protection of public and animal health during the pandemic.</p> <p>The Local Authority is still required to take action in relation to the following establishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High risk establishments where an intervention is due – this includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - food hygiene interventions are due for Category A and B establishments (prescribed frequency of 6 and 12 months respectively) - food standards interventions are due at Category A establishments (prescribed frequency 12 months) - feed interventions at Category A establishments (prescribed frequency 12 months) Establishments still trading where enforcement revisits are due New businesses – where registration information provided raises concerns about a potential public or animal health risk Businesses notifying the local authority of a change in activities <p>In these cases, the intervention should initially be undertaken remotely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a telephone discussion and paper-based audit of relevant documentation.

	<p>If the discussion or documentation provided suggests that there may be a serious public health risk, an onsite visit should be made to assess and address these risks.</p> <p>Where an onsite visit is not deemed necessary, such interventions will be considered as surveillance and should be recorded as such on the local authority management information system. This will ensure that a planned intervention will remain due</p> <p>The Local Authority should continue to focus on urgent reactive work to address potentially serious public and animal health risks relating to food/feed. This includes the following:</p> <p>Following up on food or feed incidents Investigating foodborne disease outbreaks Following up on any intelligence of change in food or feed business activities that suggests a potential public health or animal health risk Proactively checking businesses with Food Hygiene Ratings of 0, 1 or 2 (less than broadly compliant) to verify if they are trading and if they have started to operate delivery services or have introduced new processes to enable them to diversify their menu Proactive surveillance of local changes, such as setting up of community groups preparing meals, or established businesses changing what they do, such as pubs providing takeaway food</p> <p>In all cases, follow up or investigation should initially be undertaken remotely - - a telephone discussion and paper-based audit of relevant documentation. If the discussion or documentation provided suggests that there may be a serious public health risk, an onsite visit should be made to assess and address these risks</p>
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	By not doing the inspections there will be a risk that all required visits will not be completed by March 2021 unless there is a reduction in the required numbers. Risk assessments should be completed if visits are required, and employees should be provided with the required PPE if identified as necessary
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	None
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None

Signed:

Richard Ball
Director for Economy & Place

Date: 14 May 2020