

ANGUS COUNCIL

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 25 AUGUST 2009

THE FOOD HYGIENE INFORMATION SYSTEM

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

**ABSTRACT:**

The Food Hygiene Information Scheme is a means of providing information to consumers about the standards of hygiene in food businesses at the point of sale and on the web.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree:
- (i) to the adoption and implementation of the Food Hygiene Information Scheme (FHIS) in Angus, and
  - (ii) to the Head of the Economic Development and Environmental and Consumer Protection Division agreeing a plan of implementation for this scheme with the Food Standards Agency (Scotland).

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In December 2008 the Food Standards Agency's board recommended that the FHIS was the appropriate format for a national "Scores on the Doors" scheme in Scotland. The Board took this decision after reviewing the results of a consultation exercise involving a wide range of stakeholders including bodies which represented the interests of consumers.
- 2.2 In February 2009 the Division received a questionnaire from the Food Standards Agency for the purpose of establishing the views and intentions of local authorities regarding FHIS.
- 2.3 Further to this questionnaire, officers of the division met with two representatives from the Food Standards Agency (Scotland) on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009 to discuss the assistance that the agency could provide to facilitate the implementation of the scheme in Angus. From the advice obtained at this meeting it is apparent that the agency will provide materials such as certificates, stickers etc. Funding may also be available if required by the Council.
- 2.4 A provisional date, for implementation of FHIS in Angus, of December 2010 was also discussed.

**3. THE SCHEME**

- 3.1 The Food Hygiene Information Scheme (FHIS) is intended to be simple for consumers to understand and for local authorities to apply.
- 3.2 The Food Premises are assessed during programmed inspections and the FHIS does not require separate inspection scheduling.
- 3.3 The two outcomes of compliance assessment under this scheme are "Pass" or "Improvement Required" (failure to achieve a pass). The "Pass" standard represents a situation where the Council does not consider it necessary to revisit the food establishment for enforcement purposes until the next programmed intervention (inspection). Any food establishment falling below the required standards of a "Pass" is classified as "Improvement Required".
- 3.4 Food premises that have registered under the food hygiene legislation but have not been inspected are entitled to an Awaiting Inspection Certificate in terms of the scheme.

- 3.5 Finally measures to ensure that it is fair to food business operators/owners will result in the Council requiring to put in place procedures for appeal against an officer's judgement and also for operators/owners requesting re-assessment where they are of the opinion that compliance has been achieved.

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Food Standards Agency's provide support with materials and limited funding if required, to aid the implementation of FHIS in Angus. Any additional costs are anticipated to be minimal and will be contained within the Economic Development and Environmental and Consumer Protection revenue budgets for 2009 – 2010.

**5. EQUALITIES**

- 5.1 The issue dealt with in this report has been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An [equalities impact assessment](#) is not required.

**6. HUMAN RIGHTS**

- 6.1 The implementation of the FHIS has the potential to contravene the Human Rights Act. The scheme however, includes a requirement for the Council to implement mechanisms to ensure a fair hearing in the event of a dispute between the Council and a food business operator.

**7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Law and Administration and Head of Finance have been consulted on the contents of this report.

**8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 FHIS is a national scheme that the Food Standards Agency is requesting Scottish local authorities to adopt. According to the agency our neighbouring local authorities have either implemented the scheme as part of the FHIS Pilot exercise or have undertaken to implement the scheme. It would therefore be advantageous for the Council to adopt and implement FHIS as this would enhance the present food safety service provision for consumers whether Angus residents or tourists to the area etc.

**Eric S Lowson**  
**Director of Infrastructure Services**

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

**E&CP/DV/JB**