

The Highland Council
Community Services Committee

18 August 2016

Agenda Item	13
Report No	COM 32/16

Environmental Health Operational Plan 2016/17

Report by Director of Community Services

Summary

This report invites Members to approve the Environmental Health Operational Plan 2016/17

1. Background

- 1.1 Members will be aware that this Committee approves the Community Services Service Plan which sets out the general objectives for the Service. Environmental Health also submits a general operational plan for Member approval. The plan provides Members with information on the objectives for the whole of Environmental Health including those areas not covered by the service plan. The report is published to provide members of the public and businesses with background information on the function.
- 1.2 The Operational Plan for 2016/17 is provided in **Appendix 1**.

2. Key objectives

- 2.1 The plan contains challenging objectives for Environmental Health to contribute to the aim of a healthier and safer highlands. Key objectives are summarised below:
- a) Implement the Joint Health Protection Plan 2015-2017 for the area in conjunction with NHS Highland. The Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008 requires NHS Boards and Local Authorities to produce a Joint Health Protection Plan which provides an overview of health protection (communicable disease and environmental health) priorities, provision and preparedness.
 - b) Conclude Environmental Health Workforce Planning process including the implementation of new management structure. The recruitment of new Senior EHOs was completed in May 2016 and the new structure is established.
 - c) Conclude transfer and integration of dog control, pest control, litter and abandoned vehicle functions and staff into the Environmental Health team.

- d) Maintain performance in Key Performance Indicators, particularly on food safety and private water supplies.

3. Implications

- 3.1 There are no known legal, equality, climate change/Carbon Clever, Gaelic or rural implications arising from this report.
- 3.2 The operational plan contains actions that control risk associated with item CMS1 in the risk register 'Consequences of serious food and water borne disease outbreak'.

Recommendation

Members are invited to approve the Environmental Health Operational Plan 2016/17 as detailed in **Appendix 1**.

Designation: Head of Environmental & Regulatory Services

Date: 1 August 2016

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APPENDIX 1



Community Services Environmental Health Operational Plan 2016/17

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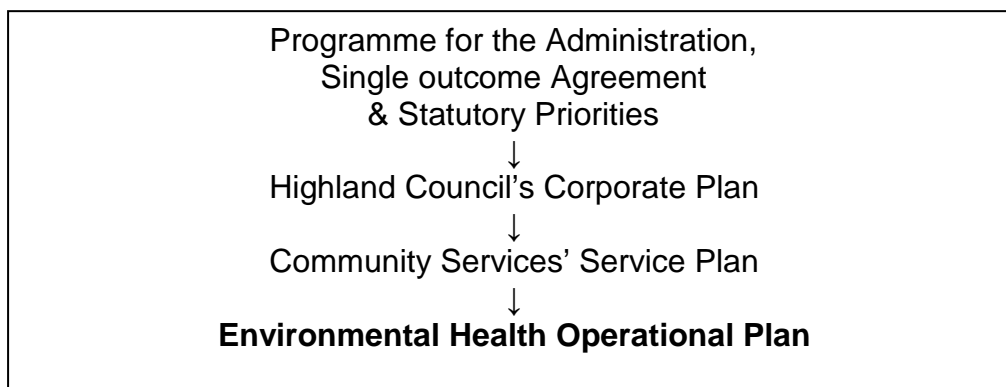
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A. **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

A.1 **Purpose, Timeframe and monitoring**

A.1.1 The Environmental Health team of Community Services provides regulatory and advice functions within the Highland Council area. This Operational Plan outlines the Environmental Health approach to delivering all aspects of regulatory and advice functions for the 2016/17 financial year. The plan forms an important part of the Service's processes to ensure national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally.

A.1.3 The plan fits into the set of plans the Council has created to ensure its corporate objectives, the Programme for the Administration and Single Outcome Agreement are fulfilled. The plans integrate as follows:



A.2 Structure and resources

A.2.1 Environmental Health has 64 posts with a full-time equivalent of 58. The Service operates 3 operational areas and works through 7 offices throughout the area as shown below:

Operational Area	Offices
North Team - Caithness, Sutherland	Wick, Golspie
West Team - Skye and Lochaber	Portree, Fort William
Mid-Highland Team – Ross & Cromarty, Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	Dingwall, Inverness and Kingussie
Headquarters	Inverness

The Service is progressing with the mobile and flexible working initiative and increasing numbers of officers are working from home and hot-desking in various Council venues.

A.2.2 A structure diagram is provided in **Appendix 1**.

A.2.3 The Service has a proposed revenue budget of £1.8m for 2016/17 and a confirmed capital programme of £100k in 2016/17 for Contaminated Land investigation and remediation.

A.3 Roles and responsibilities

A.3.1 Environmental Health is the branch of public health which deals with all aspects of the natural and built environment that may affect public health, together with animal welfare and licensing duties. The main functions include:

- Public Health Protection which includes Water supplies, Nuisances, Smoking in Public Places, Port Health, Communicable disease investigation e.g. Food-borne / Waterborne disease, Legionnaires Disease;
- Food Safety covering enforcement and advisory role for food hygiene, food labelling, and export certification;
- Enforcement and advisory role for Health & Safety at Work legislation;
- Private Sector Housing including sub-standard housing, improvement and repairs grants, closing and demolition orders, Houses in Multiple Occupation and housing defects;
- Pollution Control which includes Noise Control and local Air Quality management;
- Contaminated Land covering the regulatory role for contaminated land prevention through development control, advisory role to other council services on asset transfer and development;
- Animal Health & Welfare which can include dealing with Foot & Mouth disease, Anthrax, Avian Flu and Bluetongue;
- Licensing duties which include a general enforcement role for activities licensed under the Civic Government legislation and an administrative and enforcement role for licensing of caravan sites, venison dealers, animal

boarding establishments, pet shops, zoos, cinemas, theatres, sports grounds and dangerous wild animals;

- Dog Control, Pest Control, Litter education & enforcement, abandoned vehicles;
- Assisting with Civil contingencies and emergency planning, with specific responsibilities regarding recovery from incidents.

A.3.3 Much of the work is preventative and the team has an important role in ensuring the Highlands maintains its reputation of a safe and healthy place in which to live, work and holiday. We aim to support local businesses by providing advice on appropriate regulations and ensuring any regulatory activity follows the five principles of better regulation: Proportionate, Consistent, Accountable, Transparent and Targeted.

A.4 Risk Management

A.4.1 The team manages significant risks in relation to the consequences of serious foodborne or waterborne disease outbreak. This is identified in the Corporate Risk Register (CS1).

B. PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

B.1 Priorities and challenges 2016/17

B.1.1 Over the next year the service will be looking at the following specific issues:

1. Implement the Joint Health Protection Plan 2015-2017 for the area in conjunction with NHS Highland. The Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008 requires NHS Boards and Local Authorities to produce a Joint Health Protection Plan which provides an overview of health protection (communicable disease and environmental health) priorities, provision and preparedness. Further detail is provided in **Appendix 2**.
2. Conclude Environmental Health Workforce Planning process including implementation of new management structure.
3. Conclude transfer and integration of dog control, pest control, litter and abandoned vehicle functions and staff into the Environmental Health team.
4. Maintain performance in key Performance Indicators.
5. Work with the Food Standards Scotland on enforcement of food safety legislation including a new approach to Approved Establishments (manufacturers of products of animal origin).
6. Taking forward initiatives on issues such as Pest Control, Dog Control (including barking dogs), fly-tipping and general litter enforcement.
7. Continuing engagement with the Councils improvement process including projects on mobile working and improving methods of receiving customer complaints.

8. Continuing internal improvements on internal communications, the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) and internal Health & Safety policies.
9. Progressing the Primary Authority partnership with Boots the Chemist in relation to occupational health and safety.
10. Specific activity projects are provided in **Appendix 3**.

B.2. Objectives and performance indicators

B.2.1 Environmental Health has a number of objectives and performance results that originate in the Community Services Service Plan and these are summarised below:

Id.	8.04
Additional Service Commitment	Ensure Environmental Health Operational plan is prepared detailing key objectives and outcomes to cover statutory responsibilities and other commitments.
Key Performance Results	Plan approved annually by Community Services Committee
Risk	CMS1

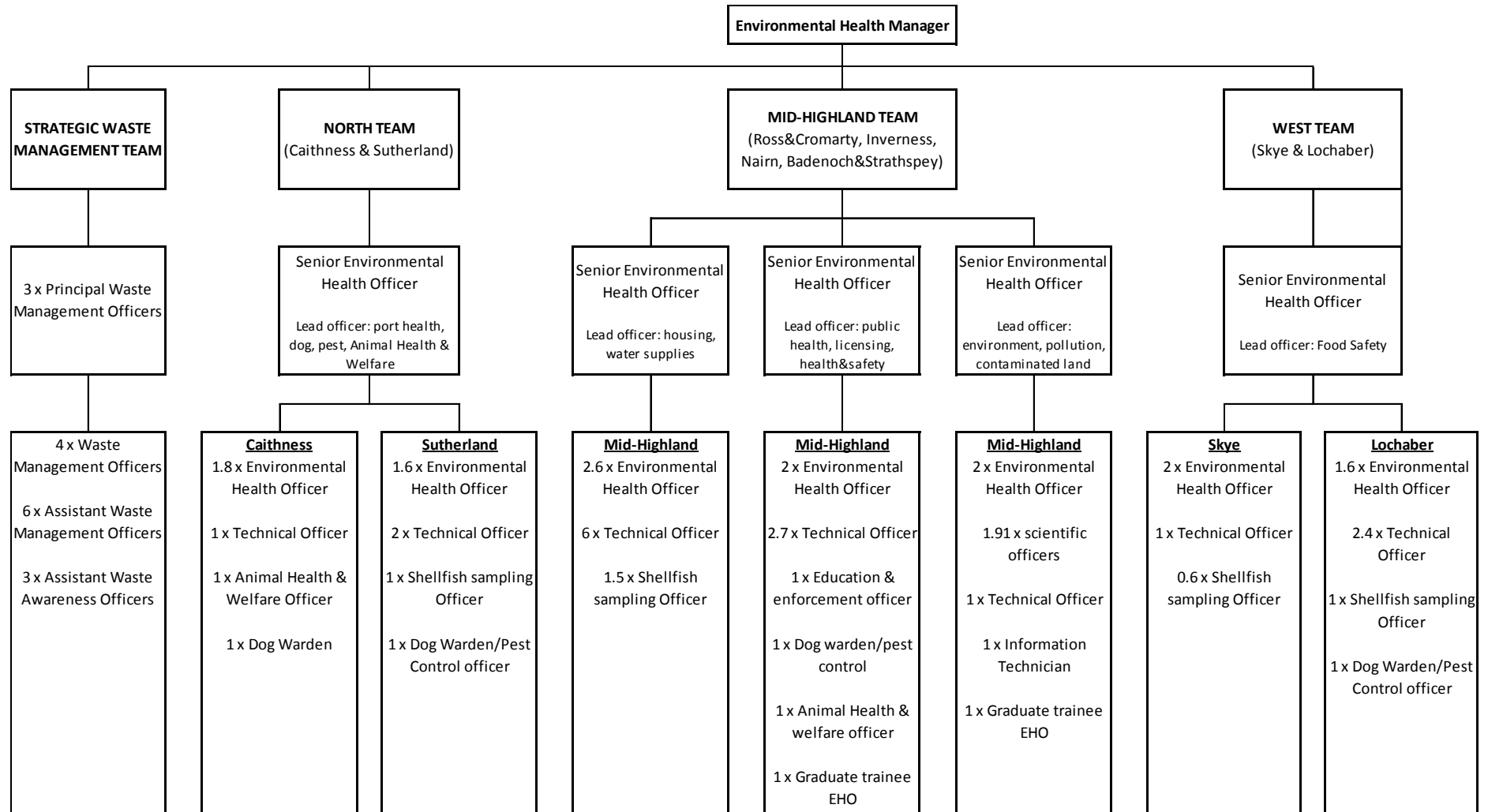
Id.	8.05
Additional Service Commitment	Ensure high risk food premises are inspected for food hygiene purposes.
Key Performance Results	% of high risk food businesses inspected for Food Hygiene purposes (IPI)
Risk	CMS1

Id.	8.06
Additional Service Commitment	Ensure Risk Assessment and sampling of all relevant Private Water Supplies to reduce risk of water borne disease.
Key Performance Results	% of high risk Private Water Supplies inspected and sampled (IPI)
Risk	TEC 4

Id.	8.03
Additional Service Commitment	Respond timeously to consultants' Contaminated Land submissions associated with Planning Applications
Key Performance Results	% of consultant's submissions within development control responded to within 28 days. (IPI)

B.2.2 The team is also participating in the APSE Performance Benchmarking Network for Environmental Health.

Appendix 1 – Environmental Health team structure



Appendix 2

Joint Health Protection Plan, April 2015 – March 2017

Actions for Highland Council Environmental Health

JHPP Ref	Outcome	Work plan
2	Addressing health inequalities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilise Private landlord registration scheme to assist with housing and anti-social behaviour. 2. Continue work on Housing improvement including licensing of HMO's 3. Implementation of the national initiative "Beyond the School Gates" 4. Review approaches to incivilities to identify good practice and specific projects to implement. Incivilities can include issues such as vandalism, graffiti, litter, dog-fouling and fly-tipping.
3	Minimise the risk to the public from E.coli contamination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To deliver the E.coli strategy relating to the implementation of the national cross contamination guidance for food safety 2. Ensure that public health interventions are taken for any failing drinking water supply, whether public or private, as necessary for E.coli failures 3. Promotion of safe practices and procedures where there is contact with livestock at animal parks and farms 4. Monitoring of bathing water quality (designated beaches/lochs). 5. Take forward recommendations of the VTEC/E. coli O157 Action Plan for Scotland, 2013 - 2017
4	Monitoring and Improving drinking water quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaboration between all 3 agencies and Scottish Water in the monitoring and improvement of public and private water supplies 2. Work to deliver the Scottish Governments Private Water Supply – Strategy for Improvement 2014.
5	Control Environmental exposures which have an adverse impact on health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tackle the effects of antisocial or excessive noise in the communities 2. Report on local air quality within each local authority area. 3. Review approach to swimming pools and spas to ensure appropriate controls are in place regarding infection control 4. Blue-green algae - Promotion of safe usage of recreational waters where there is a risk of BGA and responding to incidents 5. Progress Contaminated land strategies
6	Resilience to Pandemic Flu outbreak	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review business continuity plans and Pandemic Flu Plans
7	Effective sea and airport health plans to provide adequate disease control measures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review existing sea and airport health plans across Argyll and Bute Council and Highland Council to include Ebola arrangements. 2. Develop a generic approach to sea and airport plans to ensure compliance with International Health Regulations 3. Review the current situation concerning Port Health and identify whether Argyll and Bute should become a designated Port Health Authority
8	Enhance recovery planning for a major incident	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and further develop a generic Recovery Plan outlining multi-agency responses. 2. Exercise recovery plan 3. Contribute to Regional Resilience Partnerships
9	Effective and proportionate arrangements in place to protect public health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise joint health protection policies and procedures between all three parties 2. Review existing arrangements/plans as a routine part of each incident that occurs. 3. Undertake specific exercises for the purposes of training and evaluation of contingency plans relating to water and waste-water incidents; recovery phase following a radionuclide incident. 4. Ensure that public health is inbuilt into the revised animal health and welfare contingency plans at a national and local level.

		<p>5. Consider key performance standards for the response, investigation and actions for public health incidents</p> <p>6. Joint training in managing incidents/outbreaks and chairing these meetings</p> <p>7. Implement the recommendations from Health Protection Oversight Group (HPOG) and work with other agencies to deliver.</p> <p>8. To investigate and take appropriate action in response to service requests which have the potential to impact adversely on the environment or to public health.</p> <p>9. To ensure that appropriate public health measures are embedded into the regional Animal Health Notifiable Disease Plans as they relate to zoonotic diseases to humans</p>
10	Minimise the risk to the public from Lyme Disease	<p>1. Assist with on-going research and reviews.</p> <p>2. Continue to raise public awareness.</p> <p>3. Review and develop websites/links to provide suitable information</p>
11	Reducing the impact of tobacco, alcohol and other harmful substances on public health	<p>1. Continued regulation of the smoking ban in enclosed and public places</p> <p>2. Continue to review and consider possible health issues related to e-cigarettes.</p>
12	Strong and Safe Communities	<p>1. To investigate and implement effective controls to minimise the spread of suspected and confirmed cases of communicable and notifiable diseases in the community</p>
14	Radon protection	<p>1. Ensure that the public in radon affected areas are provided with adequate information relating to the risks of radon and the mitigation measures which can be taken to reduce the risk.</p> <p>2. Promoting radon monitoring programmes in public bodies</p> <p>3. Raising awareness of radon monitoring responsibilities to employers and landlords.</p> <p>4. Produce a Radon Strategy for ABC to include council owned property, rented property</p>
15	Education and advice programme	<p>1. Raising awareness of communicable disease and controls through improved public information.</p> <p>2. Development and review of existing information leaflets and improvements to website</p> <p>3. Where possible, consider and co-ordinate seasonal promotions e.g. summer - ticks, bbqs</p> <p>4. Increase awareness of health protection issues with local businesses through use of alternative enforcement plans</p>
16	Preventing and minimising the spread of infection	<p>1. Investigation of suspected and confirmed cases of communicable disease and implementation of appropriate controls to prevent further spread</p> <p>2. Monitoring trends by surveillance and reporting</p> <p>3. Delivering vaccination programmes</p> <p>4. Participate in HPS/FSA national research on Campylobacter infection</p>
17	Food safety priorities	<p>1. To undertake the statutory duties of the food authority in protecting food safety in the food industry, and deliver the Councils Food Safety Law Enforcement Work plan</p> <p>2. Review arrangements in light of the new Food Standards Scotland agency</p> <p>3. Work with other agencies to reduce impact of illegal shellfish harvesting and distribution.</p>
18	Health and safety at work initiatives	<p>To complete the Councils Health and Safety at Work Law Enforcement Plan</p>

Appendix 3

Specific activity projects for 2016-17

1. Public Health and pollution control

- a) Implement the Joint Health Protection Plan 2015-2017
- b) Ensuring that all Type A private water supply sources are risk assessed and sampled in 2016.
- c) Work with Drinking Water Quality Regulator on review of approach to Private Water Supplies.
- d) Review database of private water supplies to ensure supplies are being appropriately addressed under the regulations.
- e) Review local air quality issues in Queensgate, Inverness and wider Local Air Quality Management strategy.
- f) Review blue-green algae risk assessments
- g) Develop further initiatives on issues such as Pest Control, Dog Control (including barking dogs), fly-tipping and general litter enforcement.
- h) Take forward project on raising awareness of Lyme Disease and ticks.

2. Food Safety

a) Food Safety – inspection priorities

It must be noted that investigations, or enforcement action, significant to public health will take priority over the targets specified below.

Priority 1: Routine programme

To inspect the following on time for the due date (or within 28 days subject to Senior EHO approval):

- Food hygiene: 100% target for A rated, B rated, Approved premises;
- Food hygiene: 100% target for C, where resources permit with most overdue targeted first;
- Food Hygiene: Where resources permit, most overdue D rated.

- Food Standards: 100% target for A rated;
- Food Standards: 100% target for B rated that are manufacturers.

For all food hygiene inspection in caterers and retailers do a focussed food standards inspection.

Priority 2: Unrated food hygiene premises

Senior EHOs and officers to ensure all food hygiene premises that are unrated premises are given priority and inspected according to procedure and the area list of unrated food hygiene premises is reviewed monthly.

- b) Work with the Food Standards Scotland on enforcement of food safety legislation including a new approach to Approved Establishments (manufacturers of products of animal origin).
- c) Take forward outcome of national 'High risk foods' working group.
- d) Conclude review of export certification procedures and charges in line with national guidance issued in 2015.

- e) Continue working with colleagues in Education services on food standards and school meal procurement.

3. Health and Safety at Work enforcement and advice role

- a) Participate in the 2016/17 national programme of work identified by the HSE
- b) Revisit work on preventing and controlling ill-health from animal contact at visitor attractions
- c) In 2016/17 continue on-going project on gas safety in catering premises - to raise awareness of the dangers from LPG in kitchens etc.
- d) Project on stock room safety in November.

4. Contaminated Land

- a) Review information and reports submitted in support of Planning Applications and to liaise with Planning and Building Control Officers to ensure sites are safely redeveloped through the planning process.
- b) Promote ways of providing contaminated land advice in-house to other Services within the Council in order to minimise spend on external consultants.
- c) Assist with other Services within the Council, SEPA and external consultants on the Inverness City Region Deal land regeneration commitment for the remediation of parts of Longman Landfill.
- d) Assist and advise when consulted on sites being considered under the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund.
- e) Continue to advise relevant authorities regarding non-radioactive contamination during the decommissioning of the Dounreay Nuclear Facility.

5. Private sector housing enforcement, grants and disrepair/overcrowding advice role

- a) Conclude review of procedures for dealing with houses in disrepair.
- b) Publicise the available support and assistance to help tenants and home owners with houses in disrepair
- c) Improve efficiency of administration of housing grants.

6. Animal Health and Welfare

- a) Provide support, through advice and enforcement, to agricultural industry on animal disease issues of concern such as bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) and sheep scab.
- b) Participate in the Animal Health & Welfare Framework agreement

7. Licensing enforcement and miscellaneous licensing administration

- a) Review administrative process on miscellaneous licensing.

8. General

- a) Conclude Environmental Health Workforce Planning process including implementation of new management structure;
- b) Maintain key Performance Indicator targets;
- c) Consider opportunities for Environmental Health through Council redesign process and localism;
- d) Explore options for more short term partnership/joint initiatives with other agencies;

- e) Continuing engagement with the Councils improvement process;
 - f) Continuing internal improvements on internal communications, the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) and internal Health & Safety policies. Complete and settle in new EH management and team structure including pest/dog team;
 - g) Review EH duty officer model;
 - h) Improve performance/efficiency through further use of Civica APP.
-