

**Mid Kent Environmental Health Report 2016 - 18**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Communities, Housing & Environment Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service/Lead Director</b>	John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Community Services
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

**Executive Summary**

The report provides a summary of the work delivered for Maidstone by the Mid Kent Environmental Health Service. Although initially intended as an annual report this report covers two years from April 2016 to March 2018. The whole range of work carried out by both the Food & Safety and Environmental Protection teams is contained in the report.

In addition, Appendix 1 contains the Food Service Plan 2018 – 2020 for Mid Kent Environmental Health Service. It provides both detailed food safety performance information from 2014 and identifies future service demands which include the potential impact of Brexit and how it the food service could be impacted. The data also compares information for the other authorities in the partnership as well as Maidstone BC.

Appendix 2 highlights the DEFRA response to the Annual Status Report for Maidstone Air Quality issued in June 2018 which summaries the work carried out during the previous year.

**This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. That the Communities, Housing & Environment Committee notes the content of the report.

**Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Communities, Housing and Health Committee	16 October 2018

# Mid Kent Environmental Health Performance Summary for Maidstone Borough Council 2016 -18

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Mid Kent Environmental Health Service provides statutory functions for food law enforcement, health and safety at work, pollution permitting regime, private water supply monitoring and the local air quality management regime for Maidstone B.C.
- 1.2 The purpose of establishing a shared service for delivering these functions was to ensure resilience within the professional staff to meet the demands of the highly regulated areas of work to protect the public.

### **Food Safety**

- 1.3 During January 2018 the food safety service was audited by Mid Kent Audit. Their report identified nine recommendations, one medium-risk, six low-risk and two advisory. All actions have been completed.
- 1.4 The **Food Service Plan 2018 – 20**, Appendix 1, provides detailed information of the Food & Safety Teams performance between 2014 and 2017. It compares the service demands for Maidstone with those of Swale and Tunbridge Wells both in terms of routine interventions and reactive complaints and service requests. The Plan was approved by the Partnership Board, which is comprised of representatives from each local authority.
- 1.5 The plan was initially written in March 2018 and could not with any accuracy predict the impact of Brexit on food safety within the service; this unfortunately is still the case. The Food Standards Agency are working with key authorities (notably Kent County Council and Dover District Council) to put a number of contingency plans in place for a range of scenarios including a 'Hard Brexit' option which could have significant impact on Kent authorities. The district has a significant number of warehouses that could increase demand for food exports or with imports and the potential for role with deferred food inspections.
- 1.6 We have ensured that we are in a position to issue Food Export Health Certificates should food businesses apply for these in the coming year. Indeed for 2018 to date we have seen an increase in Food Export Certificates issued to businesses and it is anticipated that this will continue to increase either as a consequence of a Hard Brexit or due to increasing food exports to countries outside the Euro Zone.
- 1.7 In addition to preparing for Brexit we also face significant changes to the way we regulate food safety through the Food Standard Agency's "Regulating Our Future" programme. This covers detailed changes to the what is included in risk rating at inspections by officers to high level

strategic changes such as earned autonomy for large food businesses that have their own or independent hygiene auditing services.

## **Health & Safety**

- 1.8 Health and safety enforcement is divided between the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities and as such we broadly enforce in retail, leisure and service industries. Any planned health and safety work by the service is undertaken through focused project work agreed at a national level with the HSE. Projects are based on risk, analyse of national accident data and other factors to determine sectors for local authority work.
- 1.9 In the past two years the team have implemented two projects; gas safety in catering establishments and another on warehouse safety. This involved providing an initial training event for officers and a carefully organised programme of joint inspections using information from the database and geographical knowledge to ensure best use of resources.
- 1.10 As well as project work the team have a duty to investigate complaints and accident notified to us through the HSE RIDDOR website. RIDDOR is the official method for businesses to notify authorities of accident, incidents and dangerous occurrences. Not all RIDDOR accidents or complaints require investigation but all notifications are assessed by professional officers and advice given, for example, an incident where no work activity has occurred does not necessarily warrant investigation.

**Table 3: Reactive Health & Safety (Maidstone B C)**

	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
<b>Non Reportable Accidents</b>	44	24
<b>H&amp;S Advice Requests</b>	2	8
<b>Complaints of H&amp;S</b>	15	22
<b>LOLER notifications</b>	3	6
<b>Asbestos Notifications</b>	0	1
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>61</b>

## **Special Treatments – tattoo, skin piercing, semi-permanent beauty treatments, acupuncture**

- 1.11 The purpose of registering businesses for tattooing and other treatments is to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and protect public health.
- 1.12 The popularity of tattooing and other special treatments continues. Sadly the Tattoo Hygiene Award Scheme implemented in 2015 does not attract general trade support for reasons beyond the control of local authorities. We do encourage businesses to have the highest standards by providing advice and education to businesses and individuals registered with us.
- 1.13 For the past two years the Kent County Showground has hosted a Maidstone Tattoo Extravaganza in April. The event attracts tattoo artists from around the country who give demonstrations of their skills and offer

tattoos to the public. The popularity of this event appears to have expanded since 2017 when 84 artists attended to 168 attending in 2018. Our role is to work with the organiser to ensure all trader stalls and artists meet the Bye-Laws adopted by Maidstone.

**Table 4: Special Treatment Registrations (Maidstone)**

<b>Special Treatment</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Tattooing	5	9
Acupuncture	2	1
Semi Permanent Make-Up	2	8
Cosmetic Piercing	0	10
Extravaganza Event	59	137

### **Infectious Disease Control**

- 1.14 The Food & Safety team investigate individual cases of notifiable disease, such as Campylobacter, E.coli or Legionella. Cases are referred from an individual's GP for laboratory confirmation via Public Health England (PHE) to the local authority. Should we have a food poisoning outbreak we work closely with the PHE to control the outbreak and identify the source of the problem, this may be bacterial or viral, food borne or person to person contact.
- 1.15 The purpose is to control the spread of infection or prevent further cases of food poisoning.

**Table 5: Infectious Disease Reports**

<b>Causative Organism</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Campylobacter	208	174	231
Vibrio Cholera	1	0	1
Cryptosporidium	27	16	20
Cyclospora	0	1	0
Dysentery (Shigella)	2	2	4
E.coli	6	6	6
Unconfirmed Food Poisoning Outbreak (no organism identified)	2	0	1
Giardia	6	11	13
Hepatitis E	2	1	1
Infectious Hepatitis	2	0	1
Legionella	1	1	2
Leptospirosis	0	0	2
Listeria	0	0	1
Paratyphoid	1	0	0
Salmonella sp.	13	16	15

## **Environmental Protection**

- 1.16 Within Mid Kent Service the work of the Environmental Protection Team relates to specialised aspects of environmental protection work such as air quality, the pollution permit regime, and private water supplies. We also aim to 'design out' future environmental problems by working with the planning and development control service to prevent noise, odour or other nuisances to developments.

## **Private Water Supplies**

- 1.17 There are six private water supplies in the Maidstone area, three are private residences, two commercial sites and one a combined commercial and residential systems. The scheme we operate under is strictly controlled by the Drinking Water Inspectorate. We are required to carry out a risk assessment every five years on each supply to ensure the system and water quality is satisfactory. We also carry out a number of water samples for bacterial quality per year for each supply.

## **Pollution Prevention Control**

- 1.18 The pollution prevention regime is a DEFRA lead management scheme for the control of industrial/commercial processes which have the potential to pollute our environment. As a local authority we issue permits with conditions, to ensure the businesses achieve the required environmental standards. We inspect these processes under a risk based scheme according to an annual inspection programme.
- 1.19 Maidstone have 42 premises with permits under this scheme, which range from complex processes associated with Vinters Park Crematorium to more straight forward controls at petrol stations and dry cleaners.
- 1.20 One of the business case aims of the shared service was to bring the majority of the inspections within the service across all three authorities to mirror the service delivery by Maidstone. During 2016/17 senior officers completed the process of delivering training to a wider band of officers to enable a wider and more detailed number of inspections to be completed in house. As a service we still use the service of an external consultant to deliver independent inspections of the Crematorium and one other complex industrial process.

## **Air Quality**

- 1.21 Air quality continues to be priority for the team. Over the last two years we have made some significant steps to provide a strategic plan for tackling the air quality issues facing Maidstone through the development of the Low Emissions Strategy 2017. As part of this process, officers delivered a range of specialist working groups on key themes for the strategy such as transport, public health and planning to inform the completion of the strategy.
- 1.22 A number of the actions within the strategy are well under way including the commissioning of a feasibility study into a Low Emissions Zone for

Maidstone and the Clean Air for Schools project  
<http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/other-services/environmental-health/additional-areas/clean-air-for-schools>. We are also working with KCC Public Health to map information on air quality and health.

- 1.23 In 2017 the Air Quality Management Area was amended and approved by DEFRA to make the AQMA more relevant to areas of poor air quality. It will also rationalise the need to provide air quality impact assessments to developments specifically affected by poor air quality during the planning process.
- 1.24 The team have also delivered the DEFRA grant to improve air quality jointly made in 2013 to Tonbridge & Malling and Maidstone. The grant fund was transferred to Maidstone to deliver in November 2016. October 2018 sees the first of the seventeen retro fitted buses become operational; thirteen with Nu-Venture (Maidstone and Kent wide) and four Arriva buses between Maidstone High Street and Kings Hill.
- 1.25 DEFRA have accepted the 2017 and 2018 Annual Status Reports on Air Quality. The latest 2018 report provides data and information on work undertaken to December 2017 (Appendix 2). Information on much of the air quality work in the borough can be accessed at [www.kentair.org.uk](http://www.kentair.org.uk)

### **Contaminated Land**

- 1.26 In March 2016 the reviewed Contaminated Land Strategy was approved by Communities, Housing and Environment Committee. This was necessary to reflect changes in DEFRA guidance, and the economic climate of central and local government. The strategy still reflects the statutory duties placed on the authority and its commitment to improving the level of information it holds on possible sites and the mitigation of contaminated land through development control processes. This was approved at the March 2016. Table 4 below gives the number of requests received by team during the last two years.

### **Planning Consultations**

- 1.27 A large part of the work of the team relates to providing the Development Management teams providing consultation responses on air quality, noise, potentially contaminated land and lighting. This work is important to resolve current and future environmental issues through design or mitigation controls.

	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
<b>Planning Consultations</b>	649	646
<b>Planning Appeals</b>	64	68
<b>Contaminated Land Enquiries</b>	40	28
<b>Private Water Enquiries</b>	2	5

**Table 4: Consultation and Reactive Work (Maidstone)**

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## **2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 This report is for information only; it provides a review of the range and volume of work undertaken by the Mid Kent Environmental Health Service for Maidstone.

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## **3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The report provides an important means of communicating the work of the Mid Kent Environmental Health Service delivered for Maidstone BC to members of the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee. It provides an overview of the range of work delivered and the issues being addressed by officers.

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## **4. RISK**

- 4.1 This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.

## **5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 No consultation has been required.

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## **6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	The report is for information only. The Service contributes towards 'keeping Maidstone an attractive place for all' and 'securing a successful economy for Maidstone'.	Tracey Beattie Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
<b>Risk Management</b>	No risk management implications have been identified.	Tracey Beattie Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager

<b>Financial</b>	The information set out in the report are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Head of Housing & Community Services
<b>Staffing</b>	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Head of Housing & Community Services
<b>Legal</b>	This report is for information only. Regular reports on the Service's work and performance in relation to the Council's statutory functions as mentioned in the report assist in demonstrating best value and compliance with the statutory duty.	Keith Trowell, Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	There are no specific privacy or data protection issues to address.	Keith Trowell, Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
<b>Equalities</b>	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	No implications have been identified	Tracey Beattie Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
<b>Procurement</b>	None identified	Head of Housing & Community

## 7. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Mid Kent Food Service Plan 2018 - 20
  - Appendix 2: DEFRA Comments on Maidstone Annual Status Report 2018
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**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None