

**EXTENSION OF STATUTORY SERVICE PLANS FOR REGULATORY SERVICES.**

**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to extend the current statutory services plans across Regulatory Services to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. There is a requirement for the statutory plans for food safety, health and safety and animal health and welfare to be approved by Council and these normally come to Committee at this time annually or every two years.
- 1.2 Service priorities have changed considerably since the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic. They are also likely to evolve and change as the situation continues to develop and through any easing of lockdown restrictions during the recovery phase. By extending the current plans, it allows the Council to continue to have approved plans in place, and the opportunity to review priorities once the work associated with COVID 19 is further clarified.
- 1.3 There are no financial implications to the Council from this report. There is however a risk that work related to the COVID 19 response and recovery will adversely impact on our ability to deliver other statutory environmental health work. This matter is being constantly monitored and will be kept under review with the intention to report back to committee as and when necessary.

**1.4 Recommendations**

That the PPSL Committee agree to the extension of the statutory plans detailed in section 4.4 to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020, and that further reports be brought forward in this period to ensure Members are kept up to date.

**EXTENSION OF STATUTORY SERVICE PLANS FOR REGULATORY SERVICES.**

**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1** This report seeks endorsement to extend the current statutory services plans across Regulatory Services to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic.
- 2.2** Service priorities have changed considerably since the outbreak of the pandemic. They are likely to continue to develop and grow as the situation develops and through any easing of the lockdown period where public health controls are likely to continue for the foreseeable future.
- 2.3** There is a requirement for the Council to have formal statutory plans in place for food safety, health and safety and animal health and welfare to meet formal statutory frameworks and these normally come to Committee for approval at this time every year or every two years. The report seeks Committee approval to extending the current plans to remain compliant with one element of the statutory framework and provides the opportunity to review priorities once the work associated with COVID 19 is clarified.

**3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1** That the PPSL Committee agree to the extension of the statutory plans detailed in section 4.4 to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020, and that further reports be brought forward in this period to ensure Members are kept up to date.

**4 DETAIL**

- 4.1** In delivering the Council's statutory duties, Regulatory Services have to design services to meet frameworks prescribed by Government and other agencies, including the Food Standards Scotland and the Health and Safety Executive.
- 4.2** Members will be aware that these frameworks require Councils to formally approve service plans and their respective enforcement policies, together with ensuring that there are sufficient auditing arrangements in place to assess compliance. The service plans which have come before the PPSL Committee for approval are Food Safety Law Enforcement Plan, The Occupational Health and Safety Law Enforcement Plan and the Animal Health and Welfare Law

## Enforcement Plan.

- 4.3** As a result of COVID -19 the ability to deliver these plans has been affected as we have moved to undertaking visits only where there is an immediate public health risk. Priorities have also changed with new enforcement responsibilities under the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 which places responsibilities in respect of regulation of business and adherence of social distancing and other public health measures. This has required a range of interventions, including site visits where appropriate. It is pleasing to note that the general compliance levels to date to new Covid 19 regulations by local businesses have been found to be very high. This work is likely to develop over the coming months together with the Council's potential involvement in contact tracing.
- 4.4** Given the changing workloads and priorities associated with the Council and our part in the national response to COVID-19, it is considered inappropriate at this time to take forward Plans for 2020-22 without further and more detailed assessment. It is therefore recommended that the following work plans are extended to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020
- a) Food Safety Law Enforcement Work Plan 16-19
  - b) Occupational Health and Safety Law Enforcement Plan 18-20
  - c) Animal Health and Welfare Enforcement Plan 19-20
- 4.5** These actions minimise the risks to the Council in not having updated plans in place Notwithstanding this, Members can be assured that our resources and corporate priorities will continue to be managed on a risk-based, proportionate approach to protect public health during the COVID-19 response and recovery period including current enforcement policies remaining in place.

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1** The impacts of COVID-19 have been wide reaching across Argyll and Bute in terms of our communities and this includes the current and future delivery of council services. It is important to ensure we have statutory work plans in place and by extending the period of the current plans at this time, it provides the opportunity to develop new plans for 20-22, which will inevitably include new priorities and work pressures that may arise from the pandemic response and recovery phases. These modified plans will be taken to the PPSL Committee at a later date to ensure Members are kept up to date.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

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| 6.1 | Policy    | Meets Councils Enforcement Policy and other general policies |
| 6.2 | Financial | None.  |

6.3	Legal	Meets the Councils legal duties
6.4	HR	None
6.5	Fairer Scotland Duty:	None
6.5.1	Equalities - protected characteristics	None
6.5.2	Socio-economic Duty	None
6.5.3	Islands	None
6.6	Risk	Reduces risk of non-compliance by not having formal approved plans in place.
6.7	Customer Service	No significant impact to current arrangements

**Interim Executive Director for Development and Economic Growth, Kirsty Flanagan**  
**Policy Lead Councillor David Kinniburgh**

07/05/2020

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