

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**NEIGHBOURHOODS
CABINET MEMBER**

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2015/2016

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Authority's Food Service Plan for 2015/2016.
- 1.2 The key points in this report are:
- The Food Standards Agency (FSA) requires the council to write a plan, which sets out their work for 2015/2016 and shows the resources they need.
 - The plan is risk based. It details work in food safety, food standards and feed law enforcement and includes a number of food safety projects on high profile food topics.
 - The council will target visits at the highest risk premises to secure high levels of compliance with food law.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The FSA require the council to write a plan, which sets out how they will carry out their food work. The council enforces both Food Safety and Food Standards (Consumer Protection) legislation. It also carries out work on the composition and safety of Animal Feeding Stuffs.
- 2.2 Appendix 1 and 2 contains two documents, which make up the council's Food Service Plan.
- 2.3 The planned activity is in two documents, one for Food Safety and one for Food Standards as the latter document must now include Feed Law Enforcement work.
- 2.4 The FSA require the council to approve the food service plan.
- 2.5 The council will report to the FSA on its performance against the plan at the end of March 2016.
- 2.6 The council will continue with its sampling work and collect information to stop food fraud. Removing fake and potentially harmful alcohol in the market place is a high priority.

- 2.7 We will work to reduce the regulatory burdens on business, whilst protecting health and the environment.
- 2.8 The plan aims to ensure good levels of compliance at the highest risk premises. Food safety visits will be combined with other work where this is possible
- 2.9 We will give advice and support to business and respond quickly to complaints and enquiries.
- 2.10 The plan shows how the Environmental Health (Commercial) Team (EH) and the Trading Standards Service (TS) will carry out food service work required by the FSA in 2015/2016. EH will regulate food safety via programmed visits and a range of food safety projects. 'Weak links' identified in the food safety compliance 'chain' and the promotion of food safety will remain our priority. We will also continue to promote the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Option 1 - To approve the plan
- 3.2 Option 2 – To not approve the plan

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Option 1 – Approving the plan using the FSA guidance will mean the council will meet its legal duty under Food Law.
- 4.2 Option 2 - Ignoring the FSA guidance could lead to an FSA audit of the council and the potential transfer of the service to the FSA.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The financial details are included in the Food Service Plan.
- 5.2 There are no other resource implications for consideration.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 Workers and the public will be protected from becoming victims of crime through the graduated application of food law.
- 6.2 The plan provides a framework to encourage food businesses to become food law compliant with current legislation and in so doing impact on the health determinants covered by the assessment.

- 6.3 The plan will encourage businesses to adopt a 'non-compliance costs' culture and will help them trade on a 'level regulatory playing field'.
- 6.4 The council must carry out this statutory duty and publicise it to show transparency and accountability.
- 6.5 The council's reputation will be put at risk if it fails to meet its statutory duty for the regulation of food safety and standards. The plan will remove this risk.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 7.1 We consult with businesses, following visits by staff, consumers who contact us about services and staff who carry out the service.
- 7.2 Consultee's views are taken into account when planning food enforcement work.
- 7.3 The Cabinet Member is the proprietor of an establishment that might be subject to the food safety inspection work that is the subject of this paper. In accordance with the Local Authority (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, an appropriate dispensation has been granted to reflect this declaration.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the Food Service Plan 2015/2016

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Date: 9 June 2015

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

- (1) North Lincolnshire Council Food Safety Service Plan 2015/2016
- (2) North Lincolnshire Council Food and Feed Service Plan 2015/16



NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Food Service Plan (Food Safety)

2015/2016



Produced in accordance with the requirements of
The Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement



1.0 Introduction

This plan sets out how the council, through its Environmental Health Service, will deliver food safety work to ensure that consumers can be confident that the food that they buy is safe. The plan also aims to ensure that there is a level playing field for all food business operators. The plan details how Environmental Health will meet its responsibilities under Food Safety legislation. This involves a combination of measures, which include supporting business to comply and where necessary enforcing food safety law, sampling food, the investigation of outbreaks and food related infectious disease and investigating complaints.

The structure of the plan follows the requirements contained within the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement published by the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

2.0 Aims and Objectives

To help the residents and businesses of North Lincolnshire prosper in a safe, healthy and clean environment and ensure that food produced sold or consumed in the council's area is safe to eat and does not pose a risk to health the council will:-

- Promote food safety via education, persuasion and enforcement and by the monitoring of food and water quality.
- Provide assistance and advice to local businesses to ensure food safety.
- Support the Primary Authority principle.
- Prevent the spread of communicable diseases within the local community.
- Investigate complaints/infringements of legislation and take appropriate action.
- Work to the principles identified by the Better Regulation and Delivery Office in promoting a front line regulatory service that provides businesses with confidence to grow whilst maintaining public protection.

2.1 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

Building on its vision to be dynamic, high performing and customer focused the council will continue to develop 'Aspiring People' and 'Inspiring Places'.

Our strap line is "One Council Putting Our Customer's First".

The four priorities that will guide the councils work are:-

- Excellence in customer service
- Provide value for taxpayers' money
- Make our communities safer and stronger
- Regenerate our area and increase prosperity

The Council will, through the implementation of the Food Safety Service Plan, work to improve the health and well being of the residents of North Lincolnshire. The Food Safety Service Plan contributes towards the council's priorities in the following ways:

- The inspection of food premises will encourage compliance and promote a 'non compliance costs' culture.
- Providing business advice will assist the financial viability of local food businesses and help them succeed safely.
- Regulation of food businesses will contribute towards a 'level regulatory playing field' making it fairer for all business and better for those businesses that comply with food law.

3.0 Profile of North Lincolnshire

North Lincolnshire Council is a Unitary Authority, established in 1996, covering an area of around 85,000 hectares located on the southern side of the Humber estuary and occupying tracts of land on either side of the River Trent. It is a largely agricultural area and the pattern of settlements reflects this, with market towns surrounded by many small villages. At the centre of the area lies the industrial town of Scunthorpe, which developed in the late C19 as a centre of the steel industry. Although the industry is greatly diminished in scale, Scunthorpe is still one of the major centres of the British steel industry. Like all similar communities, however, the town is endeavouring to develop a more diverse economy to secure its future and the council has been successful in attracting a number of new enterprises to the area. Approximately 50% of the total population of North Lincolnshire live in the town and its immediate environs; and it serves as a centre for shopping, employment and further education for the whole area.

The area has a total population of 167,500. The overall population density of North Lincolnshire is, however, low compared to most English Unitary Councils. This presents particular problems to the council as it tries to provide a uniform level of service to all its customers.

Agriculture dominates in the rest of the council's area. The other principal towns originally developed as market centres for the surrounding farmlands but this role is now diminished in these days of improved communications.

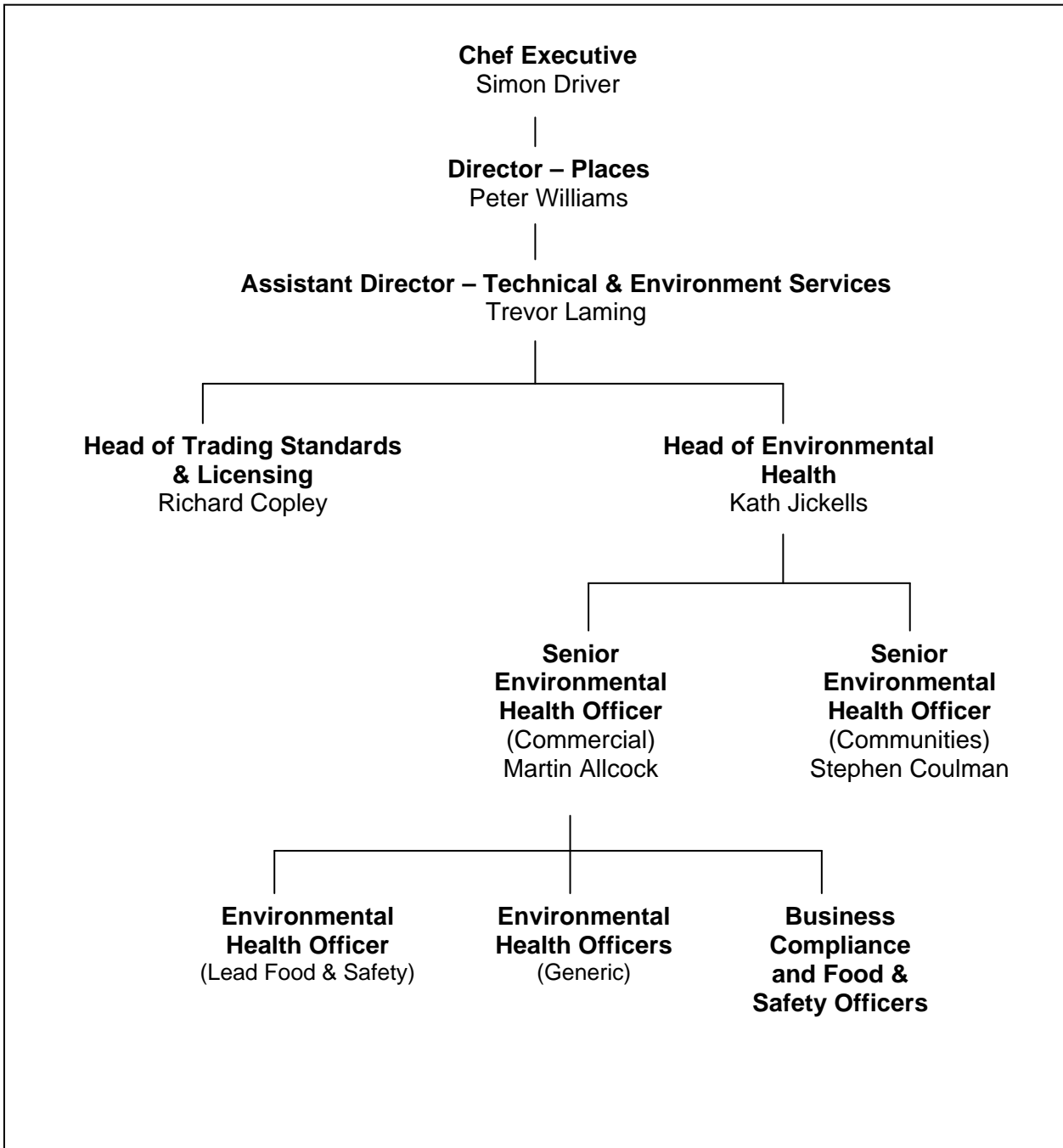
The towns of Brigg, Barton-upon-Humber, Kirton-in-Lindsey, Crowle and Epworth are, however, still important centres for the rural communities and like Scunthorpe are developing economies, more in keeping with modern requirements.

There are 10 ports within the area, including Humberside Airport, that are liable to import food or feed in to this area. There has been a rapid expansion of container traffic at the North Killingholme terminal.

The council is responsible for delivering a full range of local government services. The authority is divided into 17 electoral wards represented by 43 councillors. Within the administrative area there are 8 Town Councils and 49 Parish Councils.

The cultural diversity of the local population has increased over recent years with the influx of many ethnic groups including representatives from the expanded European Union.

3.1 Organisational Structure



3.2 Scope of Food Safety Service

As a Unitary Authority the council is responsible for the full range of duties required by European and national food law that relate to food safety, food standards and feeding stuffs.

Food Safety is the responsibility of the food safety function of the Environmental Health Commercial Team which is part of the Technical and Environment Services Division. Infectious disease control, sampling and health promotion activities are also carried out by the same team. This service plan covers this aspect of the service. Health and Safety legislation is also enforced as a joint discipline.

Food Standards and Feeding Stuffs is the responsibility of the Food Agriculture and Animal Health Team within Trading Standards and Licensing also part of the Technical and Environment Services Division. This team also enforces legal metrology and other consumer protection legislation in retail and manufacturing premises (Prices, Description, Animal Welfare and Fertiliser etc) and food hygiene at primary producers (mainly farms). This aspect of the service is detailed in the Food and Feed Law Enforcement Plan 2015/16.

Where opportunities for joint working are recognised, staff from the two services work together in the interest of efficiency and effectiveness. They also share information about new businesses and other matters of common interest and utilise a common computerised premises database.

3.3 Service Delivery Points

The Food Service is based at:
Church Square House
Po Box 42
Scunthorpe
DN15 6XQ

Church Square House is a Local Link Office in a town centre location, and is routinely available during normal office hours (9am to 5pm Mon to Thurs, 9am to 4.30pm Fri). Direct dial telephone capability is used to enhance the accessibility of the service. An increasing amount of information is being made available via the council's web site (www.northlincs.gov.uk) and contact via e-mail is encouraged. An email address has been established for food safety related enquiries at food.safety@northlincs.gov.uk.

The service is also accessible via a network of Local Link offices based in Barton, Brigg, Crowle & North Axholme, Epworth & South Axholme, Winterton, Scunthorpe and Ashby. 24hr emergency contact is available via the council's Emergency Control Centre. **(01724 276444)**

There is an out of hours answer phone facility for contacting the Trading Standards Service. **(01724 297664)**

All Trading Standards consumer complaints are initially dealt with by the Citizens Advice Consumer Service **(0845 040506)**. Matters requiring further action or investigation are referred back to the council.

3.4 Demands on the Food Safety Service

The area contains a mix of retail, catering and manufacturing premises. The manufacturing sector is eclectic in nature, as it is not based upon any particular primary industry. The businesses vary in nature from simple co-packing operations to complex food manufacturing enterprises producing from raw materials. The retail and catering businesses range from major national traders to small and medium sized enterprises. The town of Scunthorpe, in particular, contains a number of catering and retail businesses operated by traders of Sikh, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and Eastern European origin. Generally the owners of these businesses have a good command of English, but provision has been made for leaflets to be put into native languages to address the needs of kitchen staff where this is needed. The council also has access to translation services should these be required.

Food Safety Premises Profile 2015/2016	
Total number of premises	1683
Primary Producers	4
Manufacturers and packers	31
Importers/exporters	2
Distributors/Transporters	41
Retailers	420
Restaurants / Caterers	1185
Approved Establishments approved for:	
Meat Products only	4
Minced Meat only	1
Dairy Products only	1
Meat Products, Fish Products and Dairy Products	1
Cold Store	2
Total	9
Enhanced Remote Transit Sheds	2

As the competent food authority North Lincolnshire Council must give approval to establishments handling, preparing or producing products of animal origin for which requirements are laid down in Regulation (EC) 853/2004. There are currently 9 establishments in the council area which require approval an increase of 3 establishments in 2014/15. These premises are inspected annually by appropriately qualified officers.

3.5 Access to Expertise

The Public Health England Laboratory at Sand Hutton near York provides bacteriological analysis of food and potable water and faecal samples. The laboratory provides bacteriological analysis of faecal samples.

The Consultant in Communicable Disease Control, Public Health England North Yorkshire and the Humber Team, also at Sand Hutton near York provides specialist support in relation to infectious disease control.

Killgerm provide a free identification service for insects found in food premises or manifesting themselves as food complaints.

The Director of Public Health provides specialist advice on health related aspects of food safety.

3.6 Enforcement Policy

The Technical and Environment Services Divisional Enforcement Policy provides an umbrella policy for all enforcement work carried out by its Divisions. Operating within this general enforcement framework are documented policies for the Food Service i.e. Inspection, Complaint Handling, Sampling, Enforcement of Legislation and dealing with matters of non-compliance. The council recognises the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform's Regulators Compliance Code, whose principles are adopted when dealing with businesses. The service also follows the Code of Conduct of the Crown Prosecution Service, which recognises that prosecution is only one of a suite of remedies that can be used, and that others may be considered more appropriate in many cases of non-compliance.

3.7 Complaints about North Lincolnshire Council or its Officers

North Lincolnshire Council has an established complaints procedure, which, in the first instance, requires complaints to be directed to the officer's line manager.

4.0 Service Delivery

Food Safety inspections are programmed in accordance with Food Safety Act Code of Practice which is currently under review following consultation. The premises risk profile and inspection programme is summarised below.

4.1 Premises Risk Profile

Premises Risk Profile	No	Inspection Programme 2015/2016
Category A premises (High risk)	13	26
B	58	58
C	352	208
D	513	218
E (Low Risk)	676	226
Unclassified (new premises awaiting inspection)	71	71
Total	1683	807

These figures do not include new premises which open during the year. During 2014/2015, 185 new food premises were inspected in addition to the programmed inspections and 188 food premises closed.

4.2 Targeted Inspection Activity

The inspection programme is required to reflect the minimum inspection frequency dictated by the rating scheme contained in the FSA Food Safety Code of Practice. This means that dependant on risk; all premises will receive an inspection from the Commercial Team every 6 months to 2 years. The code also permits the use of alternative enforcement strategies (AES) such as questionnaires for low risk premises on a rolling 3 year cycle. The code requires that every three years the AES must be replaced by a more informed inspection strategy. In accordance with the category E Alternative Enforcement Strategy it is proposed for 2015/2016 that all category E premises will be contacted by questionnaire with interventions being utilised for significant risk premises or those not responding. Those premises that are subject to the Food Hygiene Rating scheme will be inspected where possible to maintain public confidence in the scoring scheme. This inspection strategy will provide an opportunity to update business information, offer food safety advice and guidance where appropriate and provide documentation to assist businesses that need it, with their requirement to document their food safety management procedures. The information generated from this segment of the food sector will update the food safety database and through personal engagement with food business operators will provide opportunities for food safety promotion.

In addition to the carrying out of programmed inspections as detailed above the team will continue to develop the delivery of food safety enforcement via a range of food safety projects. This approach to food safety regulation provides the team with an opportunity to focus both on specific and topical areas that have been identified as 'weak links' in the food safety compliance 'chain' in North Lincolnshire. Projects proposed for 2015/2016 will include a commitment to Food Safety Week 2015, the implementation of the UKFSS sampling system to meet the Food Standards Agency take-up requirement for this system, and the continuation of a combined visits strategy for school catering premises in partnership with the Environmental Health Communities Team. Other initiatives include the evaluation of the Salt Reduction Project, a joint working initiative with the Health Improvement and Partnerships Team and a project that will explore the reasons why premises rated as satisfactory (3 spots) are not improving over time.

Following on from its successful introduction as a project those premises that have been identified as repeat offenders will continue to receive a focused inspection regime by inspecting officers. This approach demonstrates a commitment to improve the compliance levels of the small number of consistently poor premises in North Lincolnshire by providing their operators with an opportunity to engage with officers from the team to achieve and sustain food hygiene performance.

Inspections of catering premises and restaurants will continue to be focussed towards the implementation of the compliance guidance schemes such as Safer Food Better Business (SFBB). The SFBB model will continue to be utilised where appropriate during the inspection of catering and retail premises which has resulted in an increase in the inspection time for this section of the food premises profile.

In line with the objectives of the Better Regulation Delivery Office officers also undertake health and safety project based interventions where appropriate and deal with any safety hazards when carrying out programmed food safety inspections.

4.3 Food Complaints

	2014/15 (Actual)	2015/16 (Estimated)
Number Food Safety Complaints	30	40
Number Food Premises Complaints	87	90

Food Safety/Premises complaints are responded to as a matter of priority within a planned response time of 3 working days.

4.4 Primary / Home Authority Scheme

There are no formal Home Authority or Primary Authority arrangements in place for Food Safety issues as few local manufacturers have their head office in this area. However support is provided to those companies, both directly and acting as an intermediary for enquiries from other local authorities. Whilst the council does not currently have any primary authority agreements with any businesses it will remain open to requests and will respect these arrangements where they are relevant to the enforcement of food safety at premises in North Lincolnshire. The level of resourcing will have to be reviewed if an opportunity to enter into a formal Primary Authority arrangement arises.

4.5 Advice to Business

The service has a policy of offering comprehensive advice to any business for which the service is, or is likely to be, Home Authority, Originating Authority or Primary Authority for any part of the business based within the area.

For Food Safety this includes giving advice on legal and technical matters where officers have expertise; inspecting and approving premises and assisting in the resolution of queries involving other enforcement agencies.

The implementation of the new requirement for the provision of a documented risk based hygiene system continues to generate an increased number of requests for assistance as does the impact of the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme which has generated significant contact with businesses seeking advice as how to improve their scores.

Requests for such assistance or food safety service user requests currently run at approximately 13 per week for food safety (695 requests received in 2014/15). This level of contact with the food sector will increase with the increased exposure of food

safety compliance levels offered by the availability of the national Food Hygiene Risk Rating Scheme and increasing financial constraints on the food sector in general.

4.6 Food Safety Sampling

The Food Safety sampling programme includes the sampling of food and potable water, both public and private supplies. The programme is determined annually and comprises a local sampling programme in addition to contributions to national programmes co-ordinated by the PHE. For potable waters the programme includes provision for the sampling of each of the 6 water supply zones supplied by Anglian Water and Yorkshire Water in North Lincolnshire and the sampling of the potable private water supplies in the council's area.

The programme is designed around the seasonal availability and high-risk nature of certain foods and the results it generates contribute to the data collected nationally on the microbiological quality of ready to eat foods. Food samples are generally collected informally to allow the samples to be purchased in much the same way that a member of the public would have bought the food. All business proprietors are advised of the results of samples and unsatisfactory sample results are subjected to further detailed investigation.

Bacteriological analysis of food and water samples is provided by PHE. Following a procurement review ALS Environmental Ltd have been contracted to provide chemical analysis of potable water.

The food and drinking water microbiological analysis service provided by the HPA through their laboratory in York is delivered in accordance with a service level agreement which now limits the number of free charge samples and prescribes charges for sampling beyond these levels or for certain specified sample types. The team will continue to maintain its sampling levels because of the invaluable microbiological data that they provide despite the budget pressure that this will present. During 2014/15 265 food samples were taken of which 65 (24%) were unsatisfactory and required follow-up action.

In 2015/16, balancing and re prioritisation of workloads will permit a reduced microbiological food sampling programme. The Food and Safety Team will take part in a number of cross regional and national sampling surveys involving the microbiological sampling programme for food and water in North Lincolnshire. The Team will conduct microbiological sampling of its 10 private water supplies during the year to establish their compliance with drinking water quality standards. The chemical sampling of the water quality at swimming pools is detailed in the councils Health and Safety Service plan.

4.7 Food Alerts

Food Alerts are the Food Standards Agency's way of letting the council and consumers know about problems associated with food and in some cases provide details of specific action to be taken. They are issued under two categories: Product Withdrawal/Product Recall Information Notices and Food Alerts for Action and they are received by direct email to the team.

Food Alerts are also received by the Consultants in Communicable Disease Control, Trading Standards Officers and food trade organisations to alert them to current food issues.

In 2014/2015 the team received 83 product withdrawal or recall notices and 3 Food Alerts for Action.

It is anticipated that the number of Food Alerts will remain at a similar level in 2015/2016.

4.8 Control & Investigation of Outbreaks & Food Related Infectious Disease

The control and investigation of outbreaks and food related infectious disease is the responsibility of the Commercial Team. The fundamental principle of this role is to prevent the secondary spread of infectious disease.

It is the council's policy to assess all cases and suspected cases of infectious disease notified to the council, either formally from Public Health England North Yorkshire and Humber Team or informally from other sources, to determine which of those require a full investigation. In response to resource constraints the investigation procedure for Campylobacter food poisoning cases has been amended to reduce the amount of time taken up by this work which generates epidemiological data but is of minor value to public health protection. In 2014/2015, 30 infectious disease notifications were received that required investigation in accordance with the revised investigation protocol. The target is to achieve initial assessments within one working day of receipt. Where practicable initial assessments are conducted by telephone to establish food histories and/or common food links and to identify individuals (cases or contacts) working in high-risk environments thus posing a risk of further transmission. These cases or contacts are subjected to a full investigation.

Establishments associated with confirmed or suspected cases are also investigated if within the council's area or notified to the appropriate local authority for investigation. The Consultant in Communicable Disease Control, Public Health England North Yorkshire and the Humber Team with whom exclusion and clearance policies have been agreed, provides expert advice. Analytical services are provided jointly by the Public Health England Laboratory, in York.

It is the policy of the council to assist other local authorities where cross boundary incidents may have arisen.

4.9 Food Safety Liaison

The council is committed to ensuring the Food Service is consistent with that of neighbouring authorities. As a consequence the council supports a number of national and local liaison groups to secure this aim.

The council receives and takes cognisance of guidance from the Food Standards Agency, Local Government Regulation, and the professional bodies, the Trading Standards Institute and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health. For Food Safety issues the authority is a member of The Humber Authorities Food Liaison Group and the District Control of Infection Committee. Formalised liaison arrangements are also in place for the review of Planning and Building Control applications made to the authority. The team is a statutory consultee under the Licensing Act 2003.

4.10 Food Safety Promotion

This year will see the council continue to operate the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. The scheme provides the public with an easy to operate internet based access to the council's published food safety premises data and that of other local authorities that have joined the national scheme in a format that is easy for the public to understand.



The scheme has provided businesses with a window sticker for optional display on the premises. This is particularly helpful for members of the public who do not have access to the Internet. The publicising of the scoring scheme following inspections of food premises continues to be received positively by the public and the majority of food businesses. Compliance levels of businesses in North Lincolnshire have indicated a small reduction over 2014/15 to 88.0% from 91.2% for 2013/14. This may be due to an increase in the number of businesses that have found it difficult to achieve compliance under the current trading conditions. Currently the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme website has 1355 North Lincolnshire premises on its database.

The Team did not take part in Food Safety Week (FSW) 2014 because of the lack of available resources. Additional resources will allow the Team to take part in FSW 2015 and by doing so raise food hygiene awareness in local schools This successful

initiative will target Junior School children with a 'hand washing road show' and related activities. The theme for NFSW 2015 is Campylobacter and the chicken challenge which focuses on the safe handling of raw chicken in the home.

The team also receives and responds to a range of enquires relating to topical food safety issues. Enquiries may be received from the public, business or the media and are responded to as appropriate.

It is envisaged that there will be more involvement in matters pertaining to the health of North Lincolnshire residents in coming years. The team will continue to support health improvements and initiatives by working with colleagues in the council's Health Improvement and Partnerships Team to promote healthy eating and lifestyle choices.

4.11 Food Imports and Exports

The council receives requests for the issue of Export Health Certificates for food being exported from the UK. The development of excellent business links with a local company that are the UK's leading member owned retailing organisation has generated an increased number of export certification requests. In 2014/2015 246 export health certificates were issued, an increase on 2013/14 of 62%. In addition 3 requests concerning export requirements were received from local businesses. The import of Icelandic fish into Humberside Airport was suspended last year and no activity was recorded in 2014/15. The Team are prepared however should this trade route re-establish itself in 2015/16. The monitoring of the arrangements in place at our local airport and ports will take place during the year.

5.0 Resources

Provided below are details of the resources that are allocated to each aspect of the Food Safety service. The resources available for the delivery of the Food Safety Service are shared across the Environmental Health Commercial Team, which as its name suggests also has broader responsibilities for Occupational Health and Safety and Environmental Protection functions. Projected statutory workload targets and discretionary activities will reflect the resource available to this service area which have been rationalised to meet financial constraints. The establishment resource for the Food Safety Service is 4.58 FTE an increased resource from 2014/2015 (3.8) following the recruitment to the new post of Generic Environmental Health Officer.

5.1 Staffing Allocation

Designation	Posts	FTE	Level of Authorisation High - Low		Food Safety Resource (FTE)
Senior Environmental Health Officer - Commercial	1	0.5	#		0.28
Environmental Health Officer (Lead Officer - Food Safety)	1	0.8	#		0.60
Environmental Health Officers (Generic)	2	1.4		#	1.13
Business Compliance Officer	1	1.0	#		0.40
Food & Safety Officers	4	3.0		#	2.17
TOTAL	9	6.7			4.58

5.2 Financial Allocation

The projected expenditure for 2015/2016 is detailed below:

Staff costs	£ 204,000
Travel	£ 5,440
Equipment/Sampling	£ 12,240
Income	£ -5,000
Total (Net)	£ 216,680

5.3 Administration

The Food Safety Service is supported by an Administration Team which provides call handling, administration and some clerical support in addition to providing a staffed contact and referral point for service users for a range of services based at Church Square House.

5.4 Staff Development Plan

Staffs' individual training needs are identified formally during Employee Appraisals held annually with an optional review after six months. The team completes its own training plan through this process. This formal process does not preclude additional training needs being addressed during the year or prevent staff from taking advantage of other opportunities that may arise. Training will be provided using a range of techniques including formal qualifications; external training courses; online training packages, internal training courses; cascade training; shadowing and mentoring. The Council supports all members of the team in maintaining continuing professional development (CPD) and encourages its Environmental Health Officers to maintain membership of the Chartered Institute and minimum CPD levels as required by the Food Safety Code of Practice. Currently 1 member of the team holds Chartered Environmental Health Officer status.

6.0 Quality Assessment

The Service Plan includes a number of performance indicators against which the Service is assessed. Detailed below are the food related performance indicators for the Food Safety Service.

6.1 Peer Auditing

The service was not the subject of an Inter Authority Auditing (IAA) Review of the service area in 2014/15 but the Team will be undertaking training to improve the consistency of rating scores.

6.2 Performance Indicators 2015/16 & Review of 2014/15

Performance indicators for the current year are detailed in the table below including a summary of performance for 2014/15. Last years performance is discussed further in Appendix A.

Indicator	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual	Comment
Percentage of planned food safety inspections completed	100%	99%	Not Achieved Review in 2015/16 (5 inspections missed)
Percentage of service users surveyed during the year regarding attitudes to service provision	30%	22%	Not Achieved – due to required reduction in consultation costs
Complaints/enquiries to the service responded to within three working days	95%	88%	Not Achieved Review in 2015/16
Percentage of food complainants satisfied with the investigation outcome	80%	100 %	Achieved
Percentage of user satisfaction with the food hygiene inspection service rated excellent/Good	80%	91%	Achieved

7.0 Review and variation against the service plan

This Food Service Plan will be formally reviewed annually in order to update the work plan and assess the previous year's performance. The review process will set out any relevant improvement plan or service development identified as necessary by the review.

A review of the Food Safety Service in 2014/2015 is attached at Appendix A.

Appendix A - Review of Food Safety Plan 2014/15

Review of Food Safety Plan

The review of the service plan for food safety compares the year's performance against targets set out in the 2014/2015 plan and relevant standards.

Overall results were highly satisfactory both in terms of the level of quality and quantity of work carried out during the year. Customer and service user surveys show that we continue to maintain excellent relationships with local food businesses and provide an excellent service to the consumer (91% rated the service good/excellent). This level of service is even more creditable when considering that it has been delivered with constrained resources and in an increasingly challenging commercial climate.

A significant impact on the workload of the team was made by the increasing number of new business start-ups and changes in ownership which have seen 185 new food businesses starting during the year each requiring a full review by the Team. The continuing popularity of the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme also generated additional workload as businesses appeared to recognise the commercial value associated with full compliance with food laws. In 2014/15 99% of the food safety inspection programme was completed. In line with the Food Safety Code of Practice and in accordance with the inspection programme, 690 inspections were carried out at food premises in North Lincolnshire in 2014/15. These inspections resulted in Officers issuing 583 informal warning letters and served 15 statutory notices. The Team was engaged with the prosecution of three businesses during the year for non-compliance with food hygiene legislation. The total costs/fines awarded for the prosecutions were £14,702.85. One prosecution resulted in the food business operator receiving a 100 hour community order and being prohibited from running a food business.

Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices (HEPN) were served during the year, a retail shop for being dirty and 3 premises had live rat infestations. The Food Safety Team was successful in obtaining Prohibition Orders for all the premises from the North Lincolnshire Magistrates Court. All of the formal action undertaken this year has resulted in excellent food safety publicity in the local press.

In addition to the routine inspection programme three new premises required Approval under the food hygiene regulations, 2 were cold stores and one meat products factory. This shows that food businesses are investing in North Lincolnshire boundaries.

During the year the team continued with its approach of focusing on food safety project work. Projects were designed to focus on specific and relevant food safety topics that would benefit from this concentrated approach and effective use of resources. This year the food safety project was distributing salt shakers and guidance leaflet to 50 fish and chip shops that were broadly compliant to help consumers reduce their salt intake. The project was conducted with the Health Improvement Team who lead on the public health agenda.

Sampling is recognised as an important part of the enforcement and monitoring of food safety compliance. The team sampling programme has regard to the inspection programme, centrally co-ordinated FSA and PHE sampling initiatives, local and topical issues. In 2014/15 resource constraints required the Team to reduce its sampling programme. During the year 265 food samples were taken and submitted to the Public Health England for analysis. Of these 65 required follow up action because of poor results. Three premises that regularly produced unsatisfactory sample results required in depth investigation to resolve the cause of the contamination placing a further demand on the Team's resources.

Complaints about food businesses and food products manufactured or sold in North Lincolnshire from consumers and business proprietors provide valuable intelligence regarding legal compliance and general standards. The Food and Safety Team investigated 30 complaints relating to food and 87 complaints about food premises during the year. All complaints have been thoroughly investigated and appropriate guidance given or enforcement action taken.

The team continued to contribute to corporate objectives by providing consumers and businesses with accurate, timely and easily understood advice and guidance through a variety of mechanisms including the web based information and articles in the local press. The team has responded to 695 requests for guidance advice and information during the year.

The team worked closely with Public Health England in providing an investigatory and advisory service for notified cases of food borne infectious disease. During 2014/15 it received 30 notifications of food borne infectious disease such as Salmonella and Legionella as well as more exotic pathogens such as Giardia. These were investigated in accordance with its revised investigation policy.

During the year the team has worked closely with the local police, the border agency and the fire authority with particularly poor premises of common interest. Closer working relationships with multiple agencies are being developed and will evolve in the future.

The council's operation of the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme continues to be well received by the public and currently 1355 North Lincolnshire food businesses are published on the national database with a broadly compliance rating of 88%.

Variation from the Service Plan.

There were no significant variations from the Service Plan

Areas for Improvement

Although only narrowly missed in 2014/2015 the indicator for inspection performance and complaints response will be monitored to ensure that the 2015/2016 target is achieved.



NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Food/Feed Service Plan

2015/2016



Produced in accordance with the requirements of
The Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement



1.0 Introduction

This plan sets out how North Lincolnshire Council, through its Trading Standards Service, will develop its food/feed service to ensure that all food/feed standards are complied with.

The plan aims to ensure that there is a level playing field for all food/feed business operators. It details how the Trading Standards Service will meet its responsibilities under the Food Safety Act 1990, Agriculture Act 1970 and European legislation for imported food/feed. This involves a combination of measures from taking samples to enforcing food/feed standards law and investigating complaints.

The structure of the plan follows the requirements contained within the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food/Feed Law Enforcement published by the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

2.0 Aims and Objectives

For 2015/2016 the Trading Standards Service will adopt as its key service aims:

- Operating a comprehensive compliance regime by means of a mix of inspection, testing and other interventions as appropriate, to ensure the legality of food/feed produced or marketed within or imported into North Lincolnshire.
- Providing assistance and advice to local businesses to enable them to market products that comply with compositional and labelling requirements.
- Carrying out food/feed standards 'Home Authority' enquiries referred by other agencies.
- Investigating complaints/infringements of legislation and taking appropriate action.
- The plan acknowledges the principles identified by the Hampton Review and will endeavour to implement the related guidance issued by the Better Regulation and Development Office. It also reflects the priorities identified by the Rogers Review on regulatory priorities.

2.1 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

Building on its vision to be dynamic, high performing and customer focused, the council will continue to develop 'Aspiring People' and 'Inspiring Places'.

Our strap line is "One Council Putting Our Customer's First".

The four priorities that will guide the councils work are:-

- Excellence in customer service
- Provide value for taxpayers' money
- Make our communities stronger
- Regenerate our area and increase prosperity

The Council will, through the implementation of the food/feed service plan, work to improve the health and well-being of the residents of North Lincolnshire. The Food/Feed Service Plan contributes towards the Council's priorities in the following ways:

- The inspection of food/feed premises will encourage compliance and promote a 'non-compliance costs' culture.
- Providing business advice will assist the financial viability of local food/feed businesses and help them succeed.
- Regulation of food/feed businesses will contribute towards a 'level regulatory playing field'.

3.0 Profile of North Lincolnshire

North Lincolnshire is largely a rural area with a population of approximately 167,500 residents. Scunthorpe is the largest town in North Lincolnshire and the administrative centre for the area. The three other major population centres are Barton upon Humber, Epworth and Brigg. North Lincolnshire is served by main road links, the M180 and A18.

There are 3 major ports, two major feed manufacturers, pet food manufacturers, feed storage facilities, feed hauliers and many farms in the area. The port of North Killingholme is located in North Lincolnshire, close to the border with North East Lincolnshire and the larger port of Immingham; it is split between two operators. Humber International Terminal is a deep water port and as such, accepts imports of bulk feed from third countries (mainly from South America). Humber Sea Terminal is a container port and accepts imports of containerised food and feed from other EU states (Holland and Belgium). The food imports are dealt with by The Hull and Goole Port Health Authority. Trading Standards have responsibility for imported feed. New Holland Bulk Terminal and Flixborough Wharf also accept smaller bulk consignments of animal feed.

A procedure has been put in place for monitoring these imported feeds. North Lincolnshire Council currently has a good working relationship with the importers, agents and hauliers bringing feeds through the ports at North Killingholme and also good links and chains of communication with the port operators and shipping lines. Contact is made via e-mail, telephone and letter where necessary. Regular notification of third country shipments are received prior to a vessel berthing at Killingholme and copies of vessel manifests are received for all vessels carrying containers from other EU ports. These manifests detail all consignments (Feed & Non Feed) being brought through the ports, including haulier details. A minimum of 100% inspection of these manifests has been agreed with the FSA, to determine what feeds are being brought into the UK via the port, at present this level of 100% checks is being maintained. Details of these consignments will be entered on to a Schedule of Animal Feed Consignments database. Where necessary, further detailed checks will be made with the hauliers regarding origin and ultimate destination within the UK. If deemed appropriate, the Inland Enforcing Authority (for the destination) will be notified (see policies on Third Country Imports and Containerised Imports).

Currently, North Lincolnshire has no Designated Ports/Points of Entry (DPE's) Therefore; no high risk animal feeds should be coming into the UK through the ports within North Lincolnshire. However, discussions have taken place with the operator of Humber International Terminal, regarding them obtaining DPE status. Should this happen, this would

put increased pressure on the service, who would have to carry out additional document checks and sampling. Charges could be applied. It appears unlikely at the present time.

There are currently 3 upper-medium risk feed manufacturers which are inspected annually for feed related matters. There are also a number of lower medium risk premises (Pet Food Manufacturers).

The food industry in North Lincolnshire is thriving; there are a large number of food manufacturing businesses which distribute nationally. Many of these companies produce a range of foods for the major supermarkets, pub/restaurant chains and the airline industry. The foods produced are varied from bacon, chickens, beetroot, cooked & prepared vegetables, soups, sauces, gravies, burgers, crisps, coffee, chocolate, pates, curry pastes, bread and ice creams. In addition there are now three breweries in the area and four potato packers, one of which is considering diversifying into producing vodka. This would be the only licensed still in the area.

North Lincolnshire is home to Nisa Today's retail consortium which is responsible for supplying a national network of members with a wide range of brands, including their own 'Heritage' brand.

3.1 Organisational Structure

The Trading Standards Service is part of the Places (Technical and Environment Services) Directorate within North Lincolnshire Council.

Food and feed enforcement within North Lincolnshire Council's Trading Standards Service is carried out by the Food, Agriculture and Animal Health team. The team is headed by a Trading Standards Officer (lead for Food and Feed) and also consists of an Enforcement Officer (Food and Feed, Animal Health), and a part time Animal Health Officer. In addition, qualified food Officers from other teams are able to assist with food work should the need arise. The team handle all demand coming into the service regarding food and feed law, supported by a basic administrative team. The team is overseen by the Head of Trading Standards & Licensing.

Within the team are two officers qualified and competent to enforce food, one of which is currently competent to enforce feed legislation and one competent to enforce weights & measures. These officers are also engaged in other aspects of Trading Standards enforcement work that fall within the teams remit, including weights and measures, animal health and welfare, infectious disease outbreaks. Only one officer is fully qualified and competent in feed law enforcement at present. The animal health officer is currently gaining competency to carry out basic feed inspections.

The structure of the food/feed team is outlined in the organisational chart as follows:-



North Lincolnshire Trading Standards has appointed the Public/Agricultural Analyst at West Yorkshire Scientific Services for the analysis and testing of feeding stuffs. If deemed necessary, there is provision for the service to utilise other scientific services.

3.2 Scope of Food & Feed Service

As well as providing comprehensive advice in response to business enquiries, the food/feed officers carry out programmed inspections of food/feed premises and re-visits where necessary to check compliance with legal requirements. Where breaches of legal requirements are identified, the necessary informal or formal action is taken. As of 13 December 2014 trading standards officers will be able to issue improvement notices, this is for failure to comply with some sections of the food related regulations. Failure to comply with the improvement notice will be considered a criminal offence.

The food/feed officers will also investigate any complaints received about food/feed standards. Complaints coming into the service are initially dealt with via the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline and may be referred or notified as appropriate.

Feed sampling, both formal & informal is carried out on imported feed and feed produced inland, according to the sampling plan drawn up & agreed with the FSA (NTSB). Sampling of both food & feed will take place using proportionate & risk based approach or by responding to complaints.

Where necessary, the service will participate in coordinated sampling surveys/programs organised by the Yorkshire and Humber Trading Standards Group (YAHTSG) or the Food Standards Agency (FSA), as agreed with the appointed Public Analyst.

The service also acts as 'Home Authority' for a number of food/feed businesses. In addition to providing these businesses with advice, the service will deal with enquiries from other Trading Standards Authorities relating to these businesses.

3.3 Service Delivery Points

The Service delivery contacts are as follows:

Postal:	North Lincolnshire Council Trading Standards Service PO Box 42 Church Square House Scunthorpe North Lincolnshire DN15 6XQ
Personal Visit:	Monday - Thursday 8.30am-5.00pm, Friday 8.30am-4.30pm
Telephone:	01724 297664
Fax:	01724 297895
Email:	trading.standards@northlincs.gov.uk
Website:	www.northlincs.gov.uk/tradingstandards
Facebook:	www.facebook.com/northlincstradingstandards

Church Square House is a Local Link office in a town centre location and is routinely open during normal office hours (9.00am to 5.00pm Mon – Thurs, 9.00am to 4.30pm Fri). Direct dial telephone capability is used to enhance the accessibility of the service. An increasing amount of information is being made available via the Council's web site and contact via e-mail is encouraged.

The service is also accessible via a network of 6 other Local Link offices based in Barton, Brigg, Crowle & North Axholme, Epworth & South Axholme, Winterton and Ashby.

24hr emergency contact is available via the Council's Emergency Control Centre (01724 276444).

There is an out of hours answer phone facility for contacting the Trading Standards Service (01724 297664).

3.4 Demands on the Food/Feed Service

There are currently 1663 food premises in North Lincolnshire with an NTSB risk.

Code(s)	Premises Profile	Number of food premises
FA	Food Primary Producer	20
FB	Manufacturer and Packer	35
FC	Importer/Exporter	1
FD	Distributor/Transporter	23
FE, FF, FG	Retailer	401
FH	Restaurant/Cafe/Canteen	175
FI	Hotel/Guest House	35
FJ	Pub/Club	168
FK	Takeaway	144
FL	Caring Premises	167
FM	School/College	95
FN	Mobil Food Unit	74
FO	Restaurant & Caterers Other	313
TOTAL		1663

The number of premises registered under EC Feed Hygiene Regulation 183/2005 is 569.

Code	Premises Profile	Number of feed premises
AF1	Primary producer	264
AF2	Livestock Farm	216
AF3	Animal Feed Manufacturer/processor/packer	8
AF4	Food business selling co-products	17
AF5	Animal Feed Importer – non EU	0
AF6	Animal Feed Distributor/Transporter	29
AF7	Animal Feed Store	12
AF8	Animal Feed Retailer	23
TOTAL		569

3.5 Access to Expertise

Public Analyst

The Service has continuous dialogue and a good working relationship with the Public Analyst on all matters concerned with food/feed sampling and analysis. Officers are encouraged to contact the Public Analyst where appropriate, to discuss sampling matters.

3.6 Enforcement Policy

The Places (Technical & Environment Services) Directorate provides an umbrella policy for all enforcement work carried out by its Divisions. Operating within this general enforcement framework are documented policies for the food/feed service i.e. Inspection, Complaint Handling, Sampling, Enforcement of Legislation and dealing with matters of non-compliance. Notice will be given to all high risk, upper-medium risk and unrated premises prior to an inspection unless it would defeat the object to do so. The service also follows the Code of Conduct of the Crown Prosecution Service, which recognises that

	inspection	
High Risk Premises	0	0 (100%)
Upper Medium Risk Premises	3	3 (100%)
Lower Medium Risk Premises	65	AES* only
Low Risk Premises	502	AES* only
Unrated Premises	11	11 (100%)
TOTALS		

*AES – Alternative Enforcement Strategy

Food Hygiene Primary Production (F Risk)

	Total Premises	Total Planned
Not farm assured	132	33 (25%)
Farm assured	247	5 (2%)
Unrated	83	83 (100%)
TOTALS		

4.2 Targeted Inspection Activity

Programmed inspections will be carried out in accordance with a risk-based approach, further outlined below.

In addition, premises may be targeted as a result of complaints received, local and national food audits, food alerts and advice from the FSA. Our inspections follow the procedure as laid down in Food Law Code of Practice 2015 (as issued under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990) & the Feed Law Code of Practice guidance, updated June 2014.

Interventions (contact with our food and feed businesses) planned for 2015/16 include a range of enforcement actions, including inspections. Re-visits will be carried out to ensure compliance for any required actions from these visits.

The focus of future food/feed law enforcement will be determined by intelligence gathered as a result of interventions and advice that officers have given to food/feed businesses. Analysis of complaints and enquiries will also be taken into account. The interpretation of the above intelligence enables the development of pre-programmed inspections, interventions and targeted food/feed projects. This ensures that resources can be directed to where they are needed most; taking into account the Council's ongoing desire to make efficiency savings wherever possible.

Under the new NTSB risk assessment scheme all high risk businesses and all upper medium risk businesses will be inspected throughout the year. Lower risk businesses will not be visited without a valid reason for doing so (complaints, requests for advice or FSA grant funded work). Unrated businesses will be visited for risk assessment purposes. Businesses may be dealt with by means of 'alternative enforcement action' as opposed to conventional 'inspections'. However, those businesses will be able to request advice and assistance from the authorised officers involved in food/feed enforcement, as required.

In order to reduce the regulatory burden on business, where possible, inspections will either be combined with Environmental Health inspections or Animal Medicines Inspectorate

inspections. In the case of premises with none complex food standards issues, carried out solely by Environmental Health Officers on Trading Standards behalf. In the case of none complex feed premises (i.e. livestock farms not mixing animal feeds); these inspections will be partially carried out by Animal Health Officers (suitably trained) on Trading Standards behalf. Any issues arising will be reported back.

Feed hygiene inspections will be made at Primary Producers (arable farms, fish farms, market gardens etc.). The frequency is dependent upon membership of a recognised farm assurance scheme. Those that are members of such a scheme will be subject to less frequent inspections (2% of the number of premises per year, whereas those that are not members will be subject to a 25% per year inspection regime). The numbers of interventions made will be agreed with FSA/NTSB as part of the 2015/2016 Grant Funded work.

The number of premises closing down and the number of new businesses opening up will contribute to the actual number of inspections undertaken. In addition to pre-programmed inspections, additional inspections are undertaken of new premises opening during the year and temporary or mobile traders at various events and markets held in the administrative area; such events include Farmers Markets and County Shows.

4.3 Food/Feed Complaints

Food/feed complaints are received into the service by letter, email or calls via the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline. Where the complaint refers to contamination, adulteration, composition and labelling, the complaint is fully investigated; such an investigation will be conducted with a view to tackling the root cause of the problem, to avoid it happening again. Advice may be sought from the YAHTSG regional food/feed group if necessary for a consensus of opinion, to ensure consistency. Where appropriate, enforcement action will be taken, having regard to the Enforcement Policy, Statutory Codes of Practice and National Guidance.

For complaints relating to imported food, officers will refer these to the Hull and Goole Port Health Authority (HGPH). Should HGPH have any concerns regarding feed imports, a reciprocal arrangement is in place.

Where the complaint is regarding foreign bodies or food safety, officers will refer the complaint to the Food and Safety team (Environmental Health Service).

If necessary the expertise of the new Food Standards Agency Food Fraud Advisory Unit will be used to assist in food fraud investigations which are being carried out on a national basis.

Where food/feed related complaints are received, enforcement will be structured to tackle the root cause and will be designed to ensure any interventions have the desired impact.

4.4 Primary / Home Authority Scheme

This Service operates in accordance with the Home Authority Principle, acting as a point of contact for businesses within North Lincolnshire that trade both within and outside of the

boundaries of the administrative area. We do not currently act as a 'Primary Authority' for any North Lincolnshire Food or Feed Business.

4.5 Advice to Business

The Service works with businesses to help them comply with the law and to encourage the use of best practice. This will be achieved through a range of activities including:

- Running courses or seminars, if it can be shown there is a demand for this type of activity.
- Written advice provided to a particular sector, for example if there is a significant change in legislation affecting that business sector.
- Advice given during the course of inspections and other visits.
- The provision of advice leaflets and information over the Service's web site.
- Responding to specific enquiries received from food and feed businesses.
- Support of national and local campaigns, such as nationally coordinated surveys.

4.6 Sampling

Having taken into consideration intelligence gathered for feed complaints, enquiries, problems and advice provided and National Priorities, we will develop our sampling plan which will detail what sampling will be carried out across the year (finances permitting). We need to ensure that we take account of the following principles:

- a) To maximise the effectiveness of our sampling activities, we will join with coordinated sampling programmes, where appropriate. We will focus on areas where we have evidence to suggest that there are problems affecting businesses and consumers in North Lincolnshire.
- b) To this end, we will not take samples where it cannot be justified that there is a need to do so. This principle will also apply to any complaints received.
- c) We will consider how our sampling can be more effective and the results maximised. We will work with our Public Analyst to discuss development of new sampling methods where there is a specific need.
- d) The sampling programme that we develop will focus on locally produced and packed products, as well as imported products. This will reflect both regional and national priorities. In particular, any priorities deemed as such by the Food Standards Agency.

In the design of our food and feed sampling plan, we will focus on our priority areas which are:

- Imported food and animal feeds (in particular those direct from 3rd countries outside the EU)
- Local food and feed manufacturers
- Local on farm mixers of animal feeds (where Additives and pre-mixtures are used)

These priorities are designed with the aim of protecting both the consumer and the majority of legitimate businesses who aim to comply with the law.

As well as carrying out our own sampling projects, the service also participates in YAHTSG co-ordinated sampling programmes. In addition, we will contribute to the FSA imported feed sampling programme, where possible.

All samples taken are recorded on the national feed database (UK FSS NET).

Samples are taken in accordance with legal requirements, (EC) 152/2009 as amended by (EC) 691/2013 the Feed Safety Code of Practice and any guidelines issued by the FSA, NTSB or ACTSO. Food samples are taken in accordance with Food Safety Act 1990, code of practice 7; Sampling for Analysis & Examination (Revised November 1990) & the Food Safety (Sampling & Qualifications) (England) regulations 2013.

In 2015/16, the number of feed samples we will submit to our Agricultural Analyst will be limited (as no internal sampling budget is available) and we are reliant on funding from the Food Standards Agency via National Trading Standards Board (NTSB). It is estimated that this figure will be in the region of 7 imported feed samples (3rd Country Imports) taken from 4 bulk consignments (previous samples have returned no positive results) and 2 samples taken from inland sources.

Food/feed samples will, in normal circumstances, be submitted to the Public or Agricultural Analyst for analysis and comment.

4.7 Food/Feed Alerts

Food/feed warnings are issued by the Food Standards Agency to all food authorities in the country when a national food safety issue has arisen with a specific food/feed product. The majority of food/feed alert warnings are issued for information only, a few requiring immediate action. However, some alert warnings may require more immediate action. Large scale incidents may impact on the demands of the service. Food/feed hazard warnings are responded to by appropriate officers of the service. All warnings and the subsequent action taken are recorded on the Civica database.

The Service monitors the European Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) to ensure any issues likely to impact on local businesses or national food safety are dealt with.

4.8 Control & Investigation of Outbreaks & Food Related Infectious Disease

Food poisoning notifications do not usually fall within the remit of the Trading Standards Service. If, however, the Service became aware of any incident of food poisoning or infectious disease, the facts would be reported to the Food and Safety Team (Environmental Health).

4.9 Food/Feed Liaison

The Service ensures that the enforcement action taken within North Lincolnshire is consistent with that of its neighbouring authorities and liaises with a wide range of organisations to varying degrees in carrying out its food law enforcement function.

Partners include: 11 other Trading Standards Departments in the Yorkshire and Humberside region which together make up the Yorkshire and Humber Regional enforcement group (YAHTSG).

Activities include liaison on all key Trading Standards issues, including discussion of more complex business advice matters to ensure a consistent approach. Through YAHTSG there are also coordinated inspections and sampling. The sharing of information and intelligence also takes place.

Food Standards Agency (FSA)

Contact is maintained as required

HM Revenue & Customs

Contact is maintained with H M R C at the ports at North Killingholme.

Port Health

Contact is maintained with the Hull and Goole Port Health Authority. Occasional meetings are held to discuss any emerging issues with HGPH and the neighbouring Trading Standards Services.

4.10 Food/Feed Promotion

Food/feed standards promotional work may form part of an annual programme of activities aimed at raising the awareness of food/feed and other issues within the scope of the Service. This may include newsletters to update businesses on new legislation, and other relevant initiatives and campaigns, attendance at local events, reference material and other information on the Council's website. Press releases may be used to highlight food issues and other information with an immediate public interest.

5.0 Resources

Provided below are details of the resources that are allocated to the delivery of the Food/Feed Plan. The establishment resource for the food team is 0.8 full time officers and for the feed service 0.7 full time officers.

5.1 Staffing Allocation

A list of officers currently authorised to undertake food/feed law enforcement across the department is maintained, together with a record of training and continuing professional development hours awarded. Currently this stands at 4 authorised food officers (1 active).

Trading Standards & Licensing Manager	0.05
Trading Standards Officers	0.8
Enforcement Officer	0.7
Animal Health Officer	0.1

5.2 Financial Allocation

The estimated cost of this service which is to be met out of the 2015/2016 Trading Standards budget allocation is broken down as follows.

Staff costs	£71,000
Travel	£5,000
Budget for Analytical work	£4,000
Training	£2,500
Equipment	£1,000
Total Cost	£83,500

5.3 Administration

Trading Standards, food/feed work is supported by an Administration Team which provides call handling, administration and some clerical support in addition to providing a staffed contact and referral point for service users.

5.4 Staff Development Plan

It is a requirement for food/feed enforcement officers to receive structured on-going training of at least 20 hours for food and 10 hours for feed, per year as continuing professional development and to ensure effective and consistent food law enforcement.

The Service uses a range of external training organisations including the Trading Standards Institute, training co-ordinated by YOHREGS, the FSA, and internally provided courses. A full range of training will be used including:

- Formal courses leading to qualifications
- Specialist external training courses and events
- Regular updates through team meetings, seminars and training days
- In-house training
- Peer review

All staff participate in the Council's annual Appraisal Scheme. Staff training needs are identified as part of the process and contribute to the training programme. It is recognised that officers undertaking the inspection of specialist or complex high risk activities require additional experience and skills.

The Service has also invested heavily in supporting a number of members of staff to study for professional qualifications.

6.0 Quality Assessment

We aim to continually improve the level of service provided. Procedures are reviewed, where necessary, to incorporate identified improvements.

6.1 Peer Auditing

Trading Standards will take part in the Inter Authority Auditing (IAA) Programme which will provide a peer review of a designated service area in line with the Food Standards Agency audit principle.

7.0 Review and variation against the service plan

The plan will be changed and updated as appropriate, at least annually. Areas for improvement are incorporated into the following year's food and law enforcement plan or dealt with as soon as possible, if there are no additional financial implications.

Appendix a - Review of Food and Feed Service Plan 2014/2015

1. Review against the Service Plan

The review compared the year's performance against targets set out in the plan 2014/2015.

The plan called for all high risk and medium risk premises to be visited, plus alternative enforcement interventions to unrated premises with a number of surveillance visits to low risk premises.

In line with Central governments push to reduce burden on business, we were in the second year of a two year implementation of the new NTSB risk rating scheme. This has resulted in a number of premises risk rating being changed during the year making it difficult to compare performance against the targets set in the service plan. However the below table has been corrected to try to reflect performance against the original risk bands.

The service achieved the following inspections:

Food Premises Risk Band	No of Inspections Planned	Primary visits made	Premises closed	Risk rating changed during year	Other visit made
High	19	4	4	11	12
Upper medium	39	17	2	22	10
Low medium	3	20	22	92	14
Low	0	26	107	36	88
Unrated	196	33	39	133	34

Feed Premises Risk Band	No of Inspections Planned	Primary visits made	Premises closed	Risk rating changed during year	Other visits made
High	6	3	1	5	0
Upper medium	0	8	1	Date not available	19
Low medium	0	4	2	Data not available	7
Low	0	36	14	Data not available	13
Unrated	69	5	2	Data not available	6

As seen from above not all of the premises identified for inspection at the start of the year were visited. The main reason for this was the risk ratings were amended during the year in line with the new risk rating scheme. This left fewer premises due for inspection than originally planned. However all the remaining premises that were due for inspection were visited.

There have been no Food Standards Agency audits of the authority during the year.

In terms of sampling, 83 food and 47 feed samples were taken. This was a around a 40% reduction in terms of food sampling but a similar number of feed samples taken. This is mainly due to a reduced food sampling budget.

The service dealt with 18 complaints from members of the public, which was a noticeable decrease on the previous year. All complaints have been thoroughly investigated and appropriate guidance given or enforcement action taken.

During the year, 14 referrals were received from another local authority under the Home Authority Principle which was recorded and taken up with the local producer. 125 service requests for assistance were received from local food and feed producers;

Training of staff was, as usual, high on the agenda with all specialist food and agriculture officers receiving the necessary training to maintain their relevant competences.

2. Identification of any variation from the Service Plan

Once again the FSA asked that additional work be carried out at Points of Import (ports) in relation to imported feeding stuffs. This extra work has meant resources have been diverted away from carrying out work identified in the Service Plan. However the funding received from the FSA was used to extend the Animal Health Officers working hours. This freed up an Enforcement Officer and allowed him to carry out this additional work, which minimised the amount of resources that were diverted away from the original service plan.

3. Areas of Improvement

With the push from Government to decreased in the number of routine inspections, which is reflected in the new premises risk rating scheme. There is a big push towards more intelligence led enforcement. Whilst some efforts have been made to improve intelligence around food and feed, this is still an area for improvement. However, this is not just a failing locally but also nationally. Improvements in intelligence are needed to better target limited resources to the areas of greatest risk.

With further reductions to the sampling budget, samples will be mainly limited to NTSB/FSA funded or complaint samples. Therefore any money made available for routine samples will be very limited and therefore the samples taken need to be targeted at areas of greatest concern and risk.