

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**GOVERNANCE & TRANSFORMATION
CABINET MEMBER**

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2016/17

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the Authority's Food Service Plan for 2016/17.
- 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 2016/17 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 related 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 that the council approves the food service plan.
- 2.5 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 2016/17. 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 be our priority. This year we will use a business support initiative to

encourage food safety compliance. We will also continue to promote the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

- 2.6 The council will report to the FSA on its performance against the plan at the end of March 2017.
- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 We will work to reduce the regulatory burdens on business, whilst protecting public health and the environment.
- 2.9 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
- 2.10 We will give advice and support to business and respond quickly to complaints and enquiries.

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 The Food Service Plan will be delivered with reduced resources by using a risk based approach.

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.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the Food Service Plan 2016/17

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

Civic Centre
Ashby Road
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN16 1AB

Author: Martin Allcock
Date: 13 June 2016

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

- (1) North Lincolnshire Council Food Safety Service Plan 2016/2017
- (2) North Lincolnshire Council Food and Feed Service Plan 2016/17



NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Food Service Plan (Food Safety)

2016/2017



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 an area with aspiring people and inspiring places the Council strives to deliver excellent outcomes for the people and places of North Lincolnshire. Its priorities that will guide the council's work are to:-

- **Enable** communities to thrive and live active and healthy lives;
- **Support** safeguard and protect the vulnerable;
- **Shape** the area into a prosperous place to live, work, invest and play;
- **Commission** to improve outcomes for individuals and communities; and to
- **Transform** and refocus ensuring that it remains dynamic and innovative.

The council will work to improve health and wellbeing of the residents of all of North Lincolnshire.

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 169,200. 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.

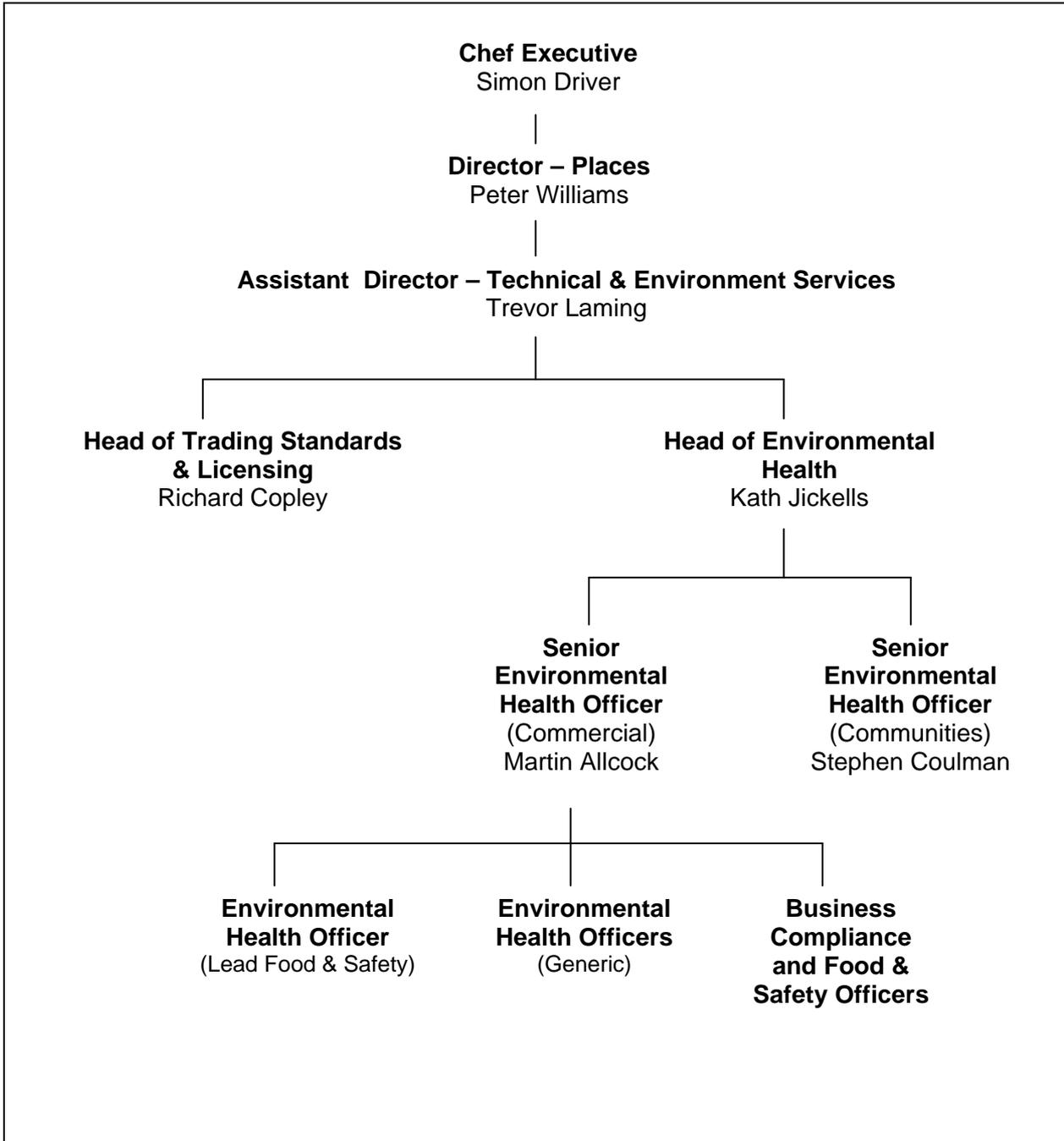
The towns of Brigg, Barton-upon-Humber, Kirton-in-Lindsey, Crowle and Epworth are, however, still important centres for the rural communities and like Scunthorpe are developing economies, more in keeping with modern requirements.

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 2016/17.

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 6NL

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 7 other 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 April 2016	
Total number of premises	1699
Primary Producers	10
Manufacturers and packers	33
Importers/exporters	1
Distributors/Transporters	43
Retailers	408
Restaurants / Caterers	1204
Approved Establishments approved for:	
Meat Products only	4
Minced Meat only	1
Dairy Products only	1
Meat Products, Fish Products and Milk Products	1
Cold Store	3
Total	10
External Temporary Storage Facility	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 10 establishments in the council area which require approval. 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 2016/2017
Category A premises (High risk)	5	5
B	65	65
C	357	222
D	511	268
E (Low Risk)	687	224
Unclassified (new premises awaiting inspection)	74	74
Total	1699	858

These figures do not include new premises which open during the year. During 2015/2016, 103 food premises closed and 197 new food premises were inspected in addition to the programmed inspections.

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. It is proposed for 2016/2017 that all category E premises will be contacted by questionnaire with interventions being utilised for significant risk premises or those not responding. 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 2016/2017 will include the continuing commitment to Food Safety Week, the implementation of the UKFSS sampling system to meet the Food Standards Agency take-up requirement for this system, the Category E questionnaire project, the implementation of a pilot project to provide businesses that are close to the highest rating with coaching and support to enable them to meet the requirements for an improved rating at their next inspection. It is also proposed to provide a facility for businesses to order the Safer Food better Business Pack on line via the Council's web site.

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.

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. This inspection model reflects the priorities highlighted by the Government report 'Common Sense, Common Safety' which advocates combined inspections to reduce the regulatory burden on business.

4.3 Food Complaints

	2015/16 (Actual)	2016/17 (Estimated)
Number Food Safety Complaints	51	50
Number Food Premises Complaints	88	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 15 per week for food safety (729 requests received in 2015/16). 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 HPA. 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 the Environment Agency have been contracted to provide chemical analysis of potable water. Humber Authorities Scientific Service (HASS) or Campden and Chorleywood Food Research Association (CCFRA) provide chemical analysis of food samples.

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 non-chargeable samples and prescribes charges for sampling beyond these levels or for certain specified sample types. The team has reduced its sampling activity to reflect the resource constraints that it is working under. During 2015/2016, 216 food samples were taken (a reduction from the previous year of 55%) of which 36 were unsatisfactory and required follow-up action. It is projected that this sampling level will be maintained during 2016/2017.

The microbiological sampling of private water supplies and mains water at food manufacturing premises has been maintained during the year. 27 samples were taken from private water supplies and 22 samples of mains water at food premises were taken. Unsatisfactory samples from private water samples (8) and mains water at food premises (3) were followed up satisfactorily in accordance with the water sampling protocol. The chemical sampling of the water quality at swimming pools is detailed in the councils Health and Safety Service plan.

In 2016/17, the reduced resources available to the Team will continue to require the strategic targeting of the service to focus on key local issues whilst maintaining a contribution towards a number of cross regional and national sampling surveys involving the microbiological sampling programme for food and water in North Lincolnshire.

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 three categories: Product Withdrawal/Product Recall Information Notices, Food Alerts for Information 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 2015/2016 the team received, 76 notices of product withdrawal or recall, 90 Food Alerts for Information and 2 Food Alerts for Action.

It is anticipated that the number of Food Alerts will remain at a similar level in 2016/2017.

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 2015/2016, 56 infectious disease notifications were received and these were investigated 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 and 88 consultations were received in 2015/2016.

4.10 Food Safety Promotion

The council will continue to operate the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. This initiative operates in a similar way to the previous scheme and 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 have a positive effect on the compliance levels of businesses in North Lincolnshire (89%) and retains its popularity with members of the public who by using the scheme are able to make informed decisions about their food safety purchases. Currently the national Food Standards Agency's Food Hygiene Rating Scheme website publishes the hygiene ratings of 1350 North Lincolnshire premises on its database. As at April 2016, 74% of North Lincolnshire premises were rated as Very Good (5 spots) or Good (4 spots). Only 10 premises were rated as unsatisfactory (0 spots).

Food Safety Week (FSW) in June 2016 provides an annual opportunity for the team to continue its hygiene awareness raising initiative in local schools. This successful initiative targets Junior School children with a 'hand washing road show' and related

activities. The theme for NFSW 2016 is a focus on helping consumers reducing food waste and advising them how to get more value from the food they consume at home, in addition to giving guidance on improving hygiene in the home.

Where possible, presentations to schools and local bodies will be provided during the year to maintain the profile of the service in the eyes of the business sector and public.

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 2015/2016, 254 export health certificates were issued. The monitoring of the arrangements in place at our local airport and ports will take place during the year.

5.0 Resources

The table at 5.1 details 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 4.71 FTE.

5.1 Staffing Allocation

Designation	Posts	FTE	Level of Authorisation High - Low		Food Safety Resource (FTE)
Senior Environmental Health Officer - Commercial	1	1.0	#		0.58
Environmental Health Officer (Lead Officer - Food Safety)	1	0.8	#		0.73
Environmental Health Officer (Generic)	1	1.0		#	0.83
Business Compliance Officer	1	1.0	#		0.40
Food & Safety Officers	3	3.0		#	2.17
TOTAL	7	6.8			4.71

5.2 Financial Allocation

The budget for 2016/2017 is detailed below:

Staff costs	£ 196,402
Travel	£ 4,858
Equipment/Sampling	£ 11,104
Income	£ -13,000
Total (Net)	£ 199,364

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. The table at 6.2 details the food related performance indicators for the Food Safety Service. The Commercial Team were included in an audit by the Food Standards Agency of Inter Authority Auditing (IAA) arrangements in 2009 which acknowledged the effectiveness of the auditing system operated by North Lincolnshire Council as a member of the Humber Authorities IAA Group. The Team were also contributors to the Regulatory Services Peer Review Challenge initiative in February 2010 and has engaged in national and regional consistency rating exercises that have positively validated risk assessment performance.

6.1 Peer Auditing

The Food Service 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 in 2016/2017. It will also take part in the national risk rating validation exercise organised by the Food Standards Agency.

6.2 Performance Indicators Review 2015/16

Performance indicators for the current year are detailed in the table below including a summary of performance for 2015/2016. Last years performance is discussed further in Appendix A.

Indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	Comment
Percentage of planned food safety inspections completed	100%	(99%)	One inspection missed
Percentage of service users surveyed during the year regarding attitudes to service provision	30%	(46%)	
Complaints/enquiries to the service responded to within three working days	95%	(92%)	
Percentage of food complainants satisfied with the investigation outcome	80%	(75 %)	Limited questionnaire response (4)
Percentage of user satisfaction with the food hygiene inspection service rated excellent/Good	80%	(90%)	

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 2015/2016 is attached at Appendix A.

Appendix A - Review of Food Safety Plan 2015/16

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 2015/2016 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 (90% 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 197 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 2015/16 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, 635 scheduled inspections were carried out at food premises in North Lincolnshire in 2015/16. These inspections resulted in Officers issuing 506 informal warning letters and served 5 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 £6,763.11.

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. Two projects were completed over the course of the year, Food Safety Week and National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme Display project.

Food Safety Week in partnership with the Food Standards Agency called "The Chicken Challenge" to raise awareness of Campylobacter as a food poisoning organism and provide information about how to avoid it with good practices in the kitchen. There were two elements to the project. During the week 18-24 May 2015 messages were sent to Scunthorpe Telegraph, post office information boards and on the Food Safety pages on the North Lincolnshire Council website. The second element involved school talks, 540 children from 10 schools received a talk from officers of the Food Safety Team during 8-12 June 2015. The talks involved a demonstration of the correct hand washing technique, how to store food correctly and safe cooking. A report was produced at the end of the project and was forwarded to the Food Standards Agency. An email was received back thanking the team for their efforts during the campaign.

In the months of November and December 2015 a project was undertaken looking at the percentage of food businesses that are displaying their food hygiene rating on behalf of the Food Standards Agency. A Graduate was employed for a period of 8 weeks to complete the project with the Lead Officer for Food Safety managing the project. The project focussed on premises with a rating of 3, 4 or 5 in high visibility areas such as high streets, 8 towns were visited during the project. The aim of the project was to encourage more premises to display their sticker showing their Hygiene rating. The project was split into different parts a pre- assessment of display, a face to face visit with the businesses not currently displaying and a post intervention visit to assess if there had been an increase in display following the face to face visit. A report was produced that showed there was only a 12% increase of display after the face to face visits.

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 2015/16 resource constraints required the Team to reduce its food sampling programme. During the year 236 food samples were taken and submitted to the Public Health England for analysis. Of these 36 required follow up action because of poor results.

During the year 2015/2016 Private Water supplies are being sampled. The Private Water Supply Regulations 2009 required risk assessments to be conducted for premises that have two or more properties using a private water supply or use the water in commercial premises and for the water to be tested on a regular basis. Currently we are sampling 11 supplies, 2 of which are sampled twice a year.

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 51 complaints relating to food and 88 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 729 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 2015/16 it received 56 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.

The council's operation of the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme continues to be well received by the public and currently 1350 North Lincolnshire food businesses are published on the national database with a broadly compliance rating of 89%.

Variation from the Service Plan.

There were only minor variations from the Service Plan.

Areas for Improvement

Although only narrowly missed in 2015/2016 the indicator for inspection performance and complaints response will be monitored to ensure that the 2016/2017 target is achieved.



NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Food/Feed Service Plan

2016/2017



ements of
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 and the codes of Practice published by the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

2.0 Aims and Objectives

For 2016/2017 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 will endeavour to implement the related guidance issued by the Delivery Office.

2.1 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

Our vision is for North Lincolnshire to be an area with aspiring people and inspiring places. We strive to deliver excellent outcomes for the people and places of North Lincolnshire. Our priorities are to:

- Enable communities to thrive and live active, healthy and fulfilled lives
- Support, safeguard and protect the vulnerable
- Shape the area into a more prosperous place to live, work, invest and play
- Commission to improve outcomes for individuals and communities
- Transform and refocus, ensuring we remain a dynamic and innovative council

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 to ensure compliance, increase consumer protection by safeguarding them from substandard and unsafe food/feed entering the food chain.
- Support food/feed business by providing advice to encourage compliance and promoting a 'non-compliance costs' culture, which in turn helps them succeed.
- Regulation of food/feed businesses will contribute towards a 'level regulatory playing field', allowing genuine businesses to prosper.

3.0 Profile of North Lincolnshire

North Lincolnshire is largely a rural area with a population of approximately 161,300 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 also accepts some smaller bulk consignments of 3rd Country 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 documentation relating to 3rd Country import manifests has been agreed with NTS/FSA, to determine what feeds are being brought into the UK via the port. Identification and physical checks (sampling) will be carried out on a certain number of these imports depending on whether they are regular or irregular imports. Details of these 3rd Country consignments will be entered on to a Schedule of Animal Feed Consignments database. Where deemed 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).

Monitoring of all the containerised arrivals has been curtailed as these are all arrivals from other EU states that should have been checked on arrival within the EU (first port of call). Quarterly checks are being carried out (as agreed with NTS/FSA) at all the ports within

North Lincolnshire, not regularly visited, to determine if any changes to their operation have taken place.

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 feed manufacturers which are inspected routinely for feed related matters plus a number of Pet Food Manufacturers. In total there are over 600 registered feed businesses within North Lincolnshire.

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 'gluten free' products, 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.

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 and also consists of an Enforcement Officer (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 two Public/Agricultural Analysts at West Yorkshire Scientific Services and Eurofins for the analysis and testing of food/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. Trading standards officers are also 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 will be referred or notified as appropriate.

Sampling, both formal & informal is carried out on imported food and feed produced inland, according to the sampling plan drawn up & agreed with the FSA & NTS. Sampling of both

food & feed will take place using an intelligence, 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.

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

3.4 Demands on the Food/Feed Service

There are currently 1826 food premises in North Lincolnshire with an FSA risk.

Code(s)	Premises Profile	Number of food premises
FA	Food Primary Producer	30
FB	Manufacturer and Packer	38
FC	Importer/Exporter	1
FD	Distributor/Transporter	48
FE, FF, FG	Retailer	473
FH	Restaurant/Cafe/Canteen	196
FI	Hotel/Guest House	38
FJ	Pub/Club	158
FK	Takeaway	145
FL	Caring Premises	173
FM	School/College	90
FN	Mobil Food Unit	80
FO	Restaurant & Caterers	325
F~	Other	31
TOTAL		1826

The number of premises registered under EC Feed Hygiene Regulation 183/2005 is 627

Code	Premises Profile	Number of feed premises
A&B	Manufacturers	7
E&F	Stores	12
G	Distributor	23
I	Importer	1
J	Surplus Food Supplier	13
M	Transporter	25
Q	Co-producer	17
S	Livestock Farm	238
T	Arable Farm	289
	Other	1
TOTAL		627

3.5 Access to Expertise

Public Analyst

The Service has continuous dialogue and a good working relationship with the Public Analysts (West Yorkshire Analytical Services & Eurofins) on all matters concerned with food/feed sampling and analysis. Officers are encouraged to contact the Public Analysts 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 A, B and unrated premises prior to an inspection unless it is it would defeat the object to do so. 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 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 Standards inspections are programmed in accordance with Food Safety Act Code of Practice (England), 2015. The risk profile and inspection programme is summarised below. Feed standards inspections are programmed in accordance with the Feed Code of Practice 2014, in accordance with the Official Feed & Food Control Regulations 2009 and the agreed NTS/FSA programme.

4.1 Premises Risk Profile

Food and feed premises are now assessed under the FSA risk assessment system and should receive a programmed inspection at the following intervals:

- A risk premises every 12 months
- B risk premises every 24 months
- C risk premises every 5 years
- Unrated risk to be assessed

Food Premises Risk

	Number of tagged premises due for inspection	Target number of inspections
A Risk Premises	30	30 (100%)
B Risk Premises	454	45 (10%)
C Risk Premises	1202	AEA* only
Unrated Premises	137	137 (100%)

*AEA – Alternative Enforcement Action

Feed Hygiene Regulations Risk

	Number of tagged premises due for inspection	Target number of inspections
A Risk Premises	1	1 (100%)
B Risk Premises	17	17 (100%)
C Risk Premises	4	AES* only
D Risk Premises	9	AES* only
E Risk Premises	415	Non inspectable
Unrated Premises	167	167 (80%)**
TOTALS		

*AES – Alternative Enforcement Strategy

**included inspection by way of letter/questionnaire

Food Hygiene Primary Production Risk

	Total Premises	Total Planned
Not farm assured	79	20 (25%)
Farm assured	301	6 (2%)
Unrated	79	79 (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 2016/17 include a range of enforcement actions, including inspections. Re-visits will be carried out to ensure compliance for any required actions from these visits. Self-certification may be accepted for minor issues.

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 FSA risk assessment scheme all A and selected B risk Premises will be inspected throughout the year. The B risk premises will be selected based on local areas of concern or priority areas.

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 also 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 numbers of interventions made will be agreed with FSA/NTS as part of the 2016/2017 Grant Funded work. In addition other premises will be visited throughout the year, in line with the FSA premises risk rating scheme. For this year this will be 100% of A risk, 100% B risk and 80% of unrated.

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

Sampling will be carried out on an intelligence led basis, taking into account information gathered from complaints, enquiries, nationally emerging issues and National Priorities. Any sampling carried out will 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 Analysts to discuss development of new sampling methods where there is a specific need.
- d) Sampling 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.

Food and feed sampling 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)

- Emerging issues identified through the use of intelligence

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 Law 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 2016/17, 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 20 samples taken from inland sources. Further imported feed samples (3rd Country Imports) will also be taken. The target is for 10% of all 3rd Country Imports to be subject to physical checks.

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: 10 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 0.8 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 (2 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 2016/2017 Trading Standards budget allocation is broken down as follows.

Staff costs	£71,000
Travel	£4,000
Budget for Analytical work	£3,000
Training	£2,000
Equipment	£1,000
Total Cost	£81,000

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 participates 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 2015/2016

1. Review against the Service Plan

The review compared the year's performance against targets set out in the plan 2015/2016.

At the start of the year the plan was based on the NSTB premises risk assessment which called for all high risk and upper medium risk premises to be visited, plus alternative enforcement interventions to unrated premises with a number of surveillance visits to lower risk premises. However during this time the risk assessment was changed to the FSA premises risk assessment scheme, which categorises the premises differently.

The service achieved the following:

Inspections Carried Out - Food Standards		
Premises Risk Rating	Interventions Achieved	Due Interventions Outstanding
Premise Rating - A	21	2
Premise Rating - B	137	120
Premise Rating - C	45	996
Premise Rating - Unrated	80	112
TOTALS	283	1230

Inspections carried out - Feed		
Premises Risk Rating	No of Inspections Planned	Primary visits made
High	1	1
Upper medium	81	23
Unrated	90	8
TOTALS	172	32

As seen from above not all of the food premises identified for inspection at the start of the year were visited. This is because the risk assessment changed during the year, which re-categorised many premises. Making many due when they originally weren't. This makes it

look like we have not achieved what we set out to do. However looking at the number of inspections carried out, compared to what was originally planned. Then the numbers are in line with what would have been expected.

In terms of feed work, the planned number of primary visits was not achieved. This was due to priority been given to carrying out FSA/NTS funded feed work. The plan did recognise that priority would be given to conducting this funded work, which was completed successfully.

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

In terms of sampling, 26 food and 15 feed samples were taken. This is a reduction from 130 food and feed sample the previous year. This is mainly due to a reduced food sampling budget.

The service dealt with 31 food complaints from members of the public. This is a noticeable increase from 18 the previous year. All complaints have been thoroughly investigated and appropriate guidance given or enforcement action taken.

During the year, 233 service requests for assistance were received in relation to food and feed. This is an increase from 125 the previous year.

The increased numbers of complaints and service requests has put a strain on the department. This has meant a slight reduction in the routine work normally carried out. However the reductions in sampling did free up some resource to deal with the increased number of complaints and service requests.

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. The funding received from the FSA via NTS 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 reductions to the sampling budget, samples will be mainly limited to NTS/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.