

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**HIGHWAYS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
CABINET MEMBER**

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2014/2015

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the Authority's Food Service Plan for 2014/2015.
- 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 2014/2015 and 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 contain 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 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 2014/2015. 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. 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 2015.
- 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 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 (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 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 (IF APPLICABLE)

- 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 may 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 for 2014/2015

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Date: 5 September 2014

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

- (1) North Lincolnshire Council Food Safety Service Plan 2014/2015
- (2) North Lincolnshire Council Food and Feed Service Plan 2014/15



NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Food Service Plan (Food Safety)

2014/2015



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 is to be a 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 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.

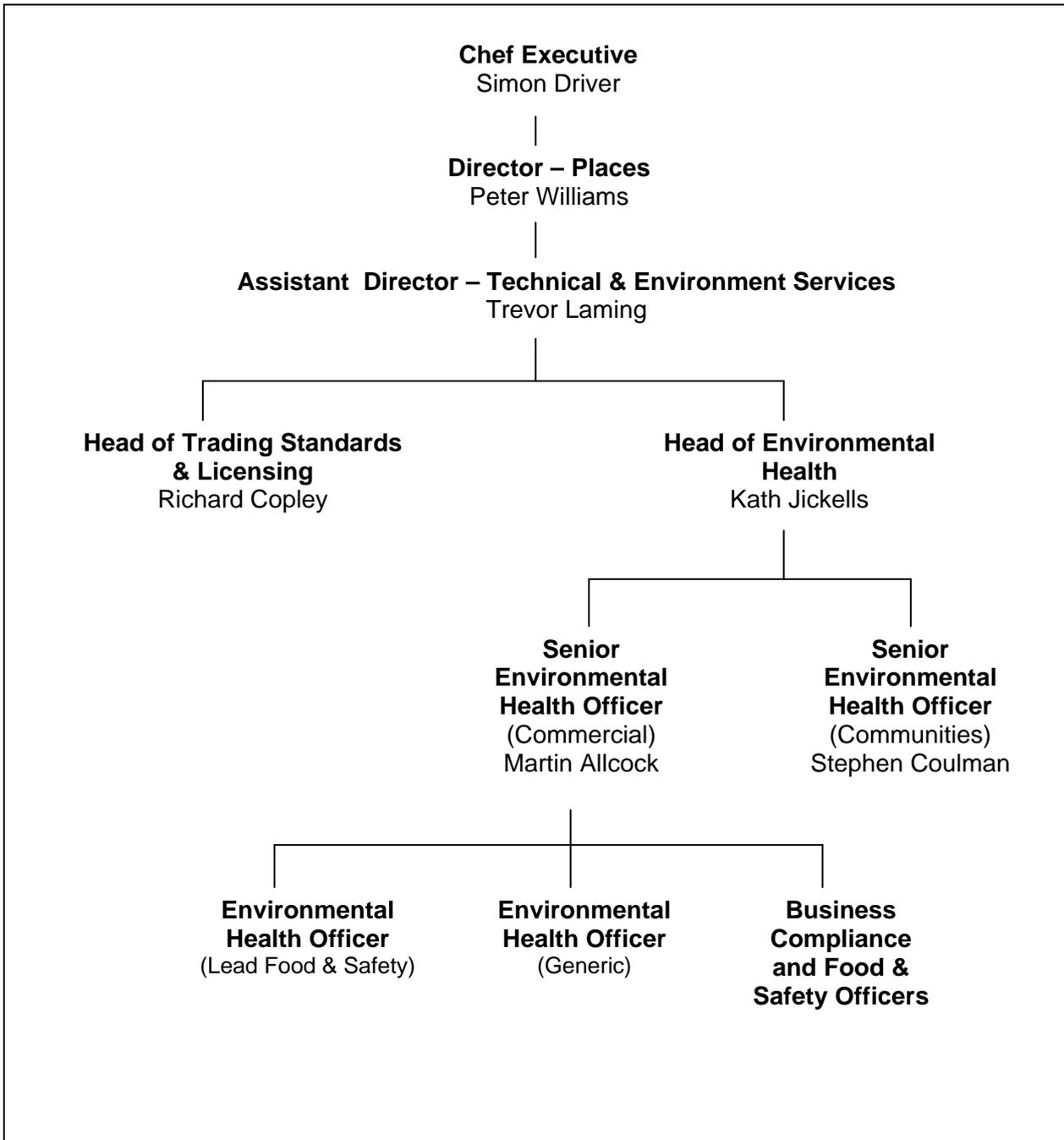
The towns of Brigg, Barton-upon-Humber, Kirton-in-Lindsey, Crowle and Epworth are, however, still important centres for the rural communities and like Scunthorpe are developing economies, more in keeping with modern requirements.

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 2014/15.

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 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 2014/2015	
Total number of premises	1673
Primary Producers	5
Manufacturers and packers	31
Importers/exporters	2
Distributors/Transporters	34
Retailers	422
Restaurants / Caterers	1179
6 Approved Establishments approved for:	
Meat Products only	3
Minced Meat only	1
Dairy Products only	1
Meat Products, Fish Products and Milk Products	1
Cold Store	1
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 6 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 2014/2015
Category A premises (High risk)	11	22
B	70	70
C	599	380
D	267	151
E (Low Risk)	685	202
Unclassified (new premises awaiting inspection)	41	41
Total	1673	866

These figures do not include new premises which open during the year. During 2013/2014, 178 food premises closed and 190 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 on a rolling 3 year cycle. The code requires that every three years the AES must be replaced by a more informed inspection strategy. The new Environmental Health structure has required a review of this strategy and it is proposed for 2014/2015 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 2014/2015 will include the continuing commitment to Food Safety Week, the provision of updated E coli information to caterers, the implementation of the UKFSS sampling system to meet the Food Standards Agency take-up requirement for this system, the completion of a dishwashers effectiveness survey and the continuation of a combined visits strategy for school catering premises in partnership with the Environmental Health Communities Team. Other initiatives including a joint working initiative with the Health Improvement and Partnerships Team in a salt reduction initiative at takeaways will be considered subject to the availability of resources.

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. 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

	2013/14 (Actual)	2014/15 (Estimated)
Number Food Safety Complaints	40	50
Number Food Premises Complaints	78	80

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 10 per week for food safety (566 requests received in 2013/14). 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 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 2013/14 479 food samples were taken of which 84 were unsatisfactory and required follow-up action.

In 2014/15, the reduced resources available to the Team will 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. 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 2013/2014 the team received 43 notices of product withdrawal or recall and 11 Food Alerts for Action.

It is anticipated that the number of Food Alerts will remain at a similar level in 2014/2015.

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 2013/2014, 62 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.

4.10 Food Safety Promotion

This year will see the council continue to operate the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. The move from the Scores on the Doors stars to the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme 'spots' has been achieved seamlessly with little or no adverse comment from businesses or the public. 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/certificate 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 (91.2%) and retain 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 Hygiene rating Scheme website has 1370 North Lincolnshire premises on its database.

Food Safety Week (FSW) in June 2014 provides an annual opportunity for the team to continue its hygiene awareness raising initiative in local schools This successful initiative will target Junior School children with a 'hand washing road show' and

related activities. The theme for NFSW 2014 is 'food safety in the home' and officers are planning to provide children with food safety tips and messages that they can take home with them to discuss with their parents and hopefully improve awareness of good food hygiene practices 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 2013/14 152 export health certificates were issued. 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 2013/14. The Team are prepared however should this trade route re-establish itself in 2014/15. 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 3.8 FTE.

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 Officer (Generic)	1	0.4		#	0.29
Business Compliance Officer	1	1.0	#		0.46
Food & Safety Officers	3	3.0		#	2.17
TOTAL	7	5.7			3.8

5.2 Financial Allocation

The projected expenditure for 2014/2015 is detailed below:

Staff costs	£ 185,000
Travel	£ 5,500
Equipment/Sampling	£ 13,500
Income	£ -30,000
Total (Net)	£ 174,000

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. 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. As a member of the Humber Authorities Inter Authority Auditing Group, the Council was satisfactorily audited in 2013/14 on its performance in terms of its premises rating consistency.

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 2014/15.

6.2 Performance Indicators 2014/15 & Review of 2013/14

Performance indicators for the current year are detailed in the table below including a summary of performance for 2013/14. Last years performance is discussed further in Appendix A.

Indicator	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Comment
Percentage of planned food safety inspections completed	100%	99%	Not Achieved Review in 2014/15
Percentage of service users surveyed during the year regarding attitudes to service provision	30%	18%	Not Achieved – due to required reduction in consultation costs
Complaints/enquiries to the service responded to within three working days	95%	93%	Not Achieved Review in 2014/15
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%	94%	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 2013/2014 is attached at Appendix A.

Appendix A - Review of Food Safety Plan 2013/14

Review against Service Plan

This review of the service plan for food safety compares the year's performance against targets set out in the 2013/14 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 (94% 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 complex deregulatory 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 204 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 2013/14 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, 874 inspections were carried out at food premises in North Lincolnshire in 2013/14. These inspections resulted in Officers issuing 560 informal warning letters and served 7 statutory notices, 1 Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order, 1 seizure of food and 1 voluntary closure. The Team was engaged with the prosecution of four businesses during the year which are currently on-going.

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. Project areas for the year included Food Safety Week 2013 which provided the Team with an opportunity to engage with the food handlers of the future. Hand washing talks and presentations delivered at local schools were well received by both schools and children. Other initiatives included a review of the food hygiene compliance amongst catering businesses at outdoor events. Guidance on E coli control was issued to local catering establishments and a survey to identify the disinfection effectiveness of dishwashers in catering premises was also carried out. Continuing partnership arrangements with Adult Services to share information have proved successful and will continue in 2014/15.

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 HPA sampling initiatives and local and topical issues. Where appropriate, sampling is co-ordinated with neighbouring authorities in the Humber Region. During the year 479 food samples were taken and submitted to the HPA collaborating laboratory for analysis. Of these 84 required follow up action because of poor results.

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 40 complaints relating to food and 78 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 560 requests for guidance advice and information during the year.

The team worked closely with the Health Protection Agency (now Public Health England) in providing an investigatory and advisory service for notified cases of food borne infectious disease. During 2013/14 it received 62 notifications of food borne infectious disease and in line with its revised investigation policy investigated 59 cases which involved food poisoning pathogens such as Salmonella and Legionella as well as more exotic pathogens such as Giardia.

On the education front the team successfully promoted food hygiene during Food Safety Week with competitions which attracted over 175 entries and a hand washing road show that visited over 750 school children in 10 primary schools.

The council's operation of the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme continues to be well received by the public and currently 1370 North Lincolnshire food businesses are published on the national database with a broadly compliance rating of 90%.

Variation from the Service Plan.

There were no significant variations from the Service Plan

Areas for Improvement

Although only narrowly missed in 2013/2014 the indicator for inspection performance and complaints response will be monitored to ensure that the 2014/2015 target is achieved.



NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Food/Feed Service Plan

2014/2015



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 food/feed standards are complied with and consequently consumers and traders can be confident in the food/feed that they buy. The plan also aims to ensure that there is a level playing field for all food/feed business operators. The plan 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, which includes taking samples, 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 2014/2105 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 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 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 and other minor ports, two major feed manufacturers, a number of 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. The port of North Killingholme is split between two operators - Associated British Ports Limited (Humber International Terminal) and C Ro Ltd (Humber Sea Terminal). 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 are being carried out. 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 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 are taking place with ABP, who operate Humber International Terminal, with a view to 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.

There are currently 3 high risk feed manufacturers(Agrimin, Elsham Linc Ltd & ABN) which are inspected annually for Feed related matters. There are also a number of medium risk premises (Pet Food Manufacturers).North Lincolnshire is also home to a number of large food businesses which distribute nationally. Many of these companies produce a range of foods for the major supermarkets: Key Country Foods & Karro produce pre-packed bacon; 2 Sisters pre-packed chickens; Axgro produce cooked and prepared vegetables and salads for retail and the airline industry; The Sauce Company produce soups and sauces for all of the major supermarkets & the food service industry; OSI produce burgers for McDonalds. North Lincolnshire is also 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. North Lincolnshire Trading Standards acts as 'Home Authority' for many of these businesses, providing advice and guidance on food labelling, Weights and Measures and advertising. At present, North Lincolnshire Trading Standards does not have a formal Primary Authority agreement with any of these businesses.

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 Trading Standards & Licensing Manager.

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 active in feed law enforcement at present.

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.

Later in 2014 there will be provision for trading standards officers 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 officer 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 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

Currently, the number of food premises in North Lincolnshire with an NTSB risk is recorded at 1779.

Code(s)	Premises Profile	Number of food premises
FA	Food Primary Producer	20
FB	Manufacturer and Packer	35
FC	Importer/Exporter	2
FD	Distributor/Transporter	37
FE, FF, FG	Retailer	488
FH	Restaurant/Cafe/Canteen	180
FI	Hotel/Guest House	32
FJ	Pub/Club	166
FK	Takeaway	152
FL	Caring Premises	177
FM	School/College	96
FN	Mobil Food Unit	74
FO	Restaurant & Caterers Other	320
TOTAL		1779

The number of premises registered under EC Feed Hygiene Regulation 183/2005 is 561.

Code	Premises Profile	Number of feed premises
AF1	Primary producer	259
AF2	Livestock Farm	218
AF3	Animal Feed Manufacturer/processor/packer	9
AF4	Food business selling co-products	17
AF5	Animal Feed Importer – non EU	1
AF6	Animal Feed Distributor/Transporter	25
AF7	Animal Feed Store	12
AF8	Animal Feed Retailer	20
TOTAL		561

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 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. The Council recognises the Regulators 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 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), April 2014. The risk profile and inspection programme is summarised below. Feed standards inspections are programmed in accordance with the Feed Code of Practice, in accordance with the Official Feed & Food Control Regulations 2006.

4.1 Premises Risk Profile

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

- High Risk premises every 12 months
- Upper Medium Risk premises every 24 months
- Lower Medium Risk premises every 5 years
- Low Risk premises as required

Food Premises (NTSB risk)

	Total Premises	Tagged for Visit at 1 April 2014
High Risk Premises	19	19(100%)
Upper Medium Risk Premises	87	39(100%)
Lower Medium Risk Premises	372	3(2%)
Low Risk Premises	1252	0
Unrated Premises	196	196(100%)
TOTALS	1926	257

Feed Hygiene Regulations (NTSB Risk)

	Total premises	Tagged for Visit at 1 April 2014
High Risk Premises	6	0
Upper Medium Risk Premises	36	6 (100%)
Lower Medium Risk Premises	152	0
Low Risk Premises	507	0
Unrated Premises	68	68 (100%)
TOTALS	769	74

Food Hygiene Primary Production (F Risk)

	Total Premises	2 Compliant	1 Non Compliant	0 Unrated	Tagged for Visit at 1 April 2014
Not farm assured	227	57	75	93	168
Farm assured	242	155	14	73	87
TOTALS	469	212	89	166	255

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 the Code of Practice issued under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990 & Food Standards Agency Feed Law Code of Practice.

Interventions (contact with our food and feed businesses) planned for 2014/15 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 some upper medium risk businesses will be inspected throughout the year. Low risk businesses will not be visited without a valid reason for doing so (complaints or requests for advice). Unrated businesses will be visited for risk assessment purposes. A number of lower medium and low risk premises will be inspected as part of the FSA/NTSB 2014/2015 grant funded work.

Food/feed business operators in particular will be visited where possible, without prior notification. This may not be possible at a primary inspection, but sampling visits will generally be unannounced.

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 carried out solely by Animal Health Officers (suitably trained) on Trading Standards behalf. Any issues arising will be reported back.

Food hygiene inspections will be made at Primary Producers (arable farms, fish farms, honey producers, 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, whereas those that are not members will be subject to a 4 yearly inspection period, subject to available staffing resources. The numbers of interventions made will be agreed with FSA/NTSB as part of the 2014/2015 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. The BRDO are able to nominate a Council as a Primary Authority if a business has requested such a partnership. A Food or Feed Business may also approach our authority to request such a partnership. We will in future contact those businesses that we feel could benefit from a Primary Authority arrangement.

If any Primary Authority arrangements are set up for any business, we will provide business advice and guidance in relation to trading standards matters, with a dedicated single point of contact, in line with any Primary Authority Agreement which is put in place.

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. This year there are significant changes to the food labelling regulations (the first since 1996)
- 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

It is the policy of the Service to produce a food and animal feeding stuffs sampling plan.

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 premixtures 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 2014/15, 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 FSA via NTSB. It is estimated that this figure will be in the region of 7 imported feed samples (3rd Country Imports – soya from South America) taken from 4 bulk consignments (previous samples have returned no positive results) and 8 samples taken from inland sources (4 x Co Products (Heavy Metals/ Mycotoxins) and 4 x Compound Feed (Carry Over e.g. Coccidiostats).

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

4.7 Food 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 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.

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 1 full time officers and for the feed service 0.7.

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	1
Enforcement Officer	0.7

5.2 Financial Allocation

The estimated cost of this service which is to be met out of the 2014/2015 Trading Standards budget allocation is broken down as follows.

Staff costs	£72,300
Travel	£5,000
Budget for Analytical work	£4,000
Training	£2,000
Equipment	£1,000
Total Cost	£84,300

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 10 hours 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
- Peer review
- In-house training

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 Safety Plan 2013/14

1. Review against the Service Plan

The review compared the year's performance against targets set out in the plan 2013/2014.

During the year we lost the services of our lead Metrology Officer, who carried out some food work. His other non-food duties had to be covered by existing staff, which made it difficult to achieve the number of food inspections that had been planned at the beginning of the year.

The plan called for all high risk and 112 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, a new risk rating scheme was introduced at the start of the year. This meant the risk bandings changed, with the introduction of new risk bands. This therefore makes 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:

Premises Risk Band	No of Inspections Planned	Target Planned	Target Achieved
High	39	39	29
Medium	278	112	95
Low	369	8	30
Unrated	329	329	89

The numbers of inspections were slightly lower than expected due the loss of a Trading Standards Officer towards the end of the year. The timing of the loss didn't allow any time for the visits to be made up.

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

In terms of sampling, the number of samples taken was as per the sampling plan. There was an increase in the total number of food samples taken (130 food) on the previous year. With 50 feed samples also taken.

The service dealt with 39 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, 1 referral was received from another local authority under the Home Authority Principle which was recorded and taken up with the local producer. 70 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.

Due to decrease in staffing levels at the end of the year the number of planned inspections was reduced slightly.

3. Areas of Improvement

With the loss of staff and decreased in the number of planned inspections. Efforts need to be made to improve intelligence around to area of food and feed. This will allow the better targeting of resources to areas of greatest risk.

The same is true for sampling. With the reduction in sampling budget only a relatively small numbers of samples can be taken. Therefore the samples taken need to be targeted at areas of greatest concern and risk.