ANNUAL FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

2010/2011

WEST LANCASHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Community Services

FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2010-2011

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COMMUNITY SERVICES

FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2010/2011

Service Aims and Objectives 1.0 **Service Aims and** The aim of the Food Service is to protect the health of residents and the wider community by ensuring that all **Objectives** commercial production of food in the Borough is carried out safely and is fit for human consumption. In order to achieve these aims the service will: Ensure that it acts in accordance with the relevant Food Standards Agency Code of Practice and other official guidance. Encourage businesses to comply with the law by offering advice. Apply the principle of continuous improvement by comparing and measuring its performance and rectifying any shortcomings. Responding to local need and ensuring the service is accessible to everyone. Ensure that the delivery of the Service is undertaken in a manner so as not to be discriminatory towards equality target groups and accessible to all who request or receive the Service. 1.2 Links The Food Safety Service Plan (formerly produced in a much abbreviated form) is produced annually by the **Corporate Objectives** Executive Manager Community Services and the Commercial Safety Manager. Performance reviews are undertaken on a quarterly basis and related performance indictors are reported for scrutiny to the elected members of Cabinet. The results of the annual performance review are also reported to both Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Council has a number of key corporate priorities and values. The work detailed in the Service Plan specifically contributes to two of these priorities & values by delivering cost-effective services that delight the Customer and are accessible to all and by ensuring local services offer the best possible value.

The service works closely with a number of other agencies and organisations eg. Food Standards

		Agency, LACORS (Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services), LBRO (Local Better Regulation Office), Cumbria & Lancashire Health Protection Agency, NHS Central Lancashire, HPA Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Network (Preston laboratory) and other local authorities to ensure a comprehensive and consistent approach to food law enforcement.
2.0	BACKGROUND	
2.1	Profile of the Local Authority	West Lancashire is located in the South West corner of Lancashire in the North West of England. It has a population of 108,378 and covers an area of 34,688 hectares. The area is characterised by a mainly flat intensively farmed agricultural landscape, which rises to the east to form low hills. The area is mainly rural, with the main exceptions being the former New Town of Skelmersdale and the market town of Ormskirk.
		In 2008, 13% of enterprises in West Lancashire were involved in the agricultural sector with a similar percentage involved in the retail/wholesale sector.
		Property and business services account for 28% of enterprises in the area, with a further 6% of businesses involved in hotels and catering services.
		Public administration, education and health accounted for approximately 10% of the organisations in West Lancashire.
		Over recent years, West Lancashire recorded an employment growth rate that was above the County and National averages.
		The majority of manufacturing is located in Skelmersdale, where there is a large industrial estate
2.2	Organisational Structure	The organisational structure of the Community Services Division is shown in Appendix 1.
		Food law enforcement duties are undertaken by the Commercial Safety Section, who deal with both food safety and health and safety enforcement matters.
		Administrative support is provided by members of a general Administration Team.
		The Health Promotion Unit also assists in a range of promotional and educational roles in respect of food safety matters.

The service uses a range of Specialist Services including:

- Food Analytical Services
- Lancashire County Council Public Analyst, plus specialist service providers as necessary.
- Food Examiner
- HPA Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Network (Preston laboratory).
- Cumbria & Lancashire Health Protection Agency
- Consultant in Health Protection
- NHS Central Lancashire
 - Director of Public Health

The Council is operating under a political structure involving an executive style Cabinet and a series of Overview & Scrutiny and Review Committees.

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

In respect of food safety matters the Commercial Safety Section is responsible for providing the following services:

- Maintenance of the food premises register
- Programmed and reactive inspection of all food premises
- Investigation of food complaints and complaints relating to unsatisfactory premises/practices
- Advisory visits and provision of information
- Food sampling for survey and monitoring purposes
- Investigation and control of infectious disease cases and outbreaks relating to food
- Responding to food alerts from the Food Standards Agency
- Maintaining an ISO9001:2008 Quality System relating to food safety matters
- Promotion of food safety through education and promotional events
- Notification to the Food Standards Agency of any serious local food problem
- Inspection of food premises for hygiene and safety
- Input to various licensing services on food safety matters
- Issue of Health Certificates
- Monitoring of Shellfish beds

	 Approval of product specific premises. Operating imported food controls
2.4 Demands on the Food Service	There are in total 836 registered food premises in the Borough. A breakdown of the premises types and their risk rating category is provided in Section 3.1 The Borough has a cross-section of food businesses which include primary producers, manufacturers, retail and catering premises. Most of these premises are small to medium enterprise businesses. Caterers and retail form the major part of these premises.
	These businesses can be divided into the following classifications: Producers 20 Slaughterhouses (seasonal) 2 Manufacturers/Processors 21 Packers 13 Importers/Exporters 1 Distributors/Transporters 18 Retailers 174 Restaurants/Caterers 577 Materials & articles/ manufacturers & suppliers 10 Of these, 6 are approved under product specific regulations. The Borough has a diversity of premises with product specific approval needed under EC Regulation 853/200. These relate to: • Fishery Products (3 premises) • Meat Products (2 Premises) • Dairy Product (1 Premises)
	The Authority has adopted a street trading consent scheme for mobile retail and catering vehicles. This places additional demands on the service with 37 vehicles requiring compliance inspections per year on average.
2.5 Service Delivery	Commercial Safety Section Community Services West Lancashire Borough Council

		Robert Hodge Centre Stanley Way Skelmersdale Lancashire WN8 8EE Telephone: 01695 577177 (switchboard) 01695 585235/585242 (direct) Fax: 01695 585126 Opening Hours: 08.45 – 17.00 (Monday-Thursday) 08.45 – 16.45 (Friday) Out of Hours: Emergency Service is available by contacting 01695 577177
		The out of hours emergency service is available 24 hours 7 days a week. An appropriate officer of the Environmental Health Service can be contacted through this number in an emergency eg. food poisoning outbreak.
2.6	Enforcement Policy	A Corporate Enforcement Policy was agreed by the Council in October 2009. The aim of this Policy is to promote consistency across the Council and it provides the principles of the Council's approaches to enforcement. The Community Services Division's Enforcement Policy, also agreed by the Council in October 2009, is positioned below the Corporate Policy and contains more specific interpretation in relation to legislation, approaches, etc. The Policies include aspects of the Food Standards Agency Service Plan requirement.
3.0	SERVICE DELIVERY	
3.1	Food Premises Inspections & Interv	ventions
3.1.1		It is West Lancashire Borough Council's Policy to carry out programmed inspections and interventions of premises in accordance with: (a) the minimum inspection frequencies and requirements detailed in the Food Standards Agency

	Food Law Code of Pract	ice (June 2008)
	(b) the Council's Enfor	cement Policy
3.1.2	The proposed Inspection	and Intervention Programme
	for 2010/2011 is as follow	
Premises No of	No of Programmed inspections	Estimated Number of Revisits
Risk Premises as Category at 1.4.10	& interventions due (1.4.10- 31.3.11)	
A 5	10	3
B 116	97	10
C 389	214	22
D 114	64	7
E 167	69	7
F 4	4	1
Total 795	458	50
Non- 41	-	-
rated		
3.1.4	introduces the term "brooriginates from NPI 184 and ratings given for compliance of practice. It shows how we complying with food safety inspection. The Code of Prosome limited flexibility in compliance with food safety achieve an improvement in the are "broadly compliant". Revisits are undertaken if assess compliance with a contraventions found during	d is based on the specific risk e using the new statutory code ell a food business operator is standards at the time of the ractice also allows authorities in dealing with businesses' by legislation, so as to try to the number of businesses who a further visit is needed to an enforcement notice or if g an inspection are of such a may be required before the
3.1.5	•	nce and training of staff is Authority has the expertise to n of the premises and
3.2 Food Complaints	laid down in the Quality Systhe nature of the complaint to public health. Complaints about food hygi of a food premises are also potential to cause harm.	igated in line with procedures stem. Action is determined by and the potential threat posed ene practices or the condition so actioned according to the Follow up action may be enext programmed inspection not excessive.

	On average the section receives 25 food complaints per year and 60 complaints about food premises.
	The length of time taken to resolve a complaint can vary considerably.
	It is the policy of West Lancashire Borough Council to give a first response within 3 working days to all food premises complaints/service requests.
3.3 Home Authority Principle	West Lancashire Borough Council subscribes to the current Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) Home Authority Principle (HAP). The authority has not been approached by, nor is aware of, any local company who wish to enter into a formal agreement within the remit of the HAP.
	West Lancashire Borough Council, however, does take on the role of "Originating" authority for several businesses that operate on a regional and/or national basis and gives advice on food safety matters.
	Much of the input from the service is generated by requests for service from other enforcement authorities.
	It is anticipated in the annual work programme that 4 originating authority referrals will be made and 4 received per year.
3.4 Primary Authority Scheme	On 6 April 2009, under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008, the Primary Authority Scheme (PAS) came into force to ensure a consistent approach between local authorities and companies having a number of outlets throughout the country.
	The operation of the PAS will be the statutory responsibility of the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO) whose role will be to register partnerships, issue guidance and resolve disputes. The scheme enables companies the right to form a statutory partnership with a single local authority. That authority then provides robust and reliable advice for other councils to take account of when carrying out inspections or dealing with noncompliance.
	Councils are now required to contact the Primary Authority for a company covered by the scheme before taking enforcement action.
	The scheme is in its very early stages and will be monitored closely.

		The service intends to comply with the new requirements of the Regulatory and Enforcement Sanctions Act 2008 by referring information to other regulators and the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO), where there is a wider regulatory interest.
3.5	Advice to Businesses	West Lancashire Borough Council is committed to providing advice to any business within its Borough or to members of the public.
		It is anticipated in the work programme that on average 50 requests will be dealt with verbally and 30 requests will result in a visit and written response. The response time required by performance indicators is 10 days.
		The enforcement policy has been published on the Council's website and all recipients of letters and notices relating to food safety issues are advised of this.
3.5	Food Sampling and Inspection	West Lancashire Borough Council's policy is to sample food and drink supplied, produced and sold within the district, in accordance with a planned sampling programme to assess its safety and quality and where necessary, in response to food complaints/investigations. Further details can be found in the Council's Food Sampling Policy for 2010/2011.
		The Council will participate in Lancashire-wide, national and European sampling programmes. Further details can be found in the Council's Food Sampling Programme for 2010/2011.
		Samples are analysed by the HPA Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Network (Preston laboratory) (Microbiological) and the Public Analyst Laboratory in Preston (chemical and content).
		West Lancashire Borough Council participates in the radioactivity monitoring in Lancashire (RADMIL) sampling scheme which surveys radioactive contamination of food grown in Lancashire. Samples are analysed at Lancashire County Council's Public Analyst Laboratory in Preston and at Lancaster University.
		West Lancashire Borough Council has cockle & mussel production beds in the Ribble to the North of the district. Routine microbiological and algal toxin samples are taken and monitored through the Centre for Environment and Aquamarine Culture and Science (CEFAS).

3.6	Food Safety Incidents	There are a small number of private water supplies monitored by West Lancashire Borough Council, which are sampled and water complaints are investigated. The Council is working to ensure it complies with the new Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009, which came into force on 1 January 2010. It is the policy of West Lancashire Borough Council to comply with the Food Standards Agency Code of Practice in relation to the handling of food alerts. Procedures are documented as part of our ISO 9001:2008 quality system. The number of notifications have increased since the commencement of the Food Standards Agency. It is estimated that the Service will respond to approximately
		70 alerts per year.
3.7	Control & Investigation Of Outbreak & Incidents Of Food Related Infectious Disease	This work will be undertaken through contact between Environmental Health Officers, Consultants in Health Protection, Director of Public Health and Control of Infection Teams. Investigation procedures & outbreak control will be undertaken in line with agreed written procedures & documentation.
3.8	Liaison With Other Organisations	Liaison arrangements exist with a number of organisations to ensure a consistent approach to enforcement action. Such arrangements include liaison with the following organisations: • LACORS • Environmental Health Lancashire (EHL) • Lancashire Food Officers Group • Cumbria & Lancashire Health Protection Agency • HPA Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Network (Preston laboratory) • Lancashire County Analyst • NHS Central Lancashire • United Utilities Plc • Lancashire County Council Trading Standards The Service intends to refer information to other regulators where there is a wider regulatory interest.
3.9	Food Safety Promotion	The service recognises the importance of food safety promotional work and as a result undertakes the following
	. 10111011011	activities: • Food Safety Week

3.10 Food Safety Training For Officers	Courses CIEH Level 2 Award in Healthier Food and Special Diets Courses Specific Seminars/Initiatives as appropriate Promotion of the FSA's Safer Food Better Business Scheme Such work is undertaken in conjunction with the Authority's Health Promotion Unit. Staff development is primarily assessed through the Employee Development Appraisal Interview undertaken annually. The Authority also participates in the Environmental Health Lancashire (EHL) Food Safety Annual Training Programme.
2.44 Imported Food	The qualifications, experience and training of staff is sufficient to ensure that the Authority has the expertise to ensure competent inspection of the premises and processes in our area.
3.11 Imported Food Controls	The Food Safety Service will undertake work necessary for the enforcement of the legislation relating to imported foods, through the following: • Food Safety Act 1990 • European Communities Act 1972 • The General Food Regulations 2004 • The Official Feed & Food Controls (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) • Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) • Products of Animal Origin (Import & Export) Regulations 1996 as amended • EU Regulation 882/2004, 178/2002 & 852/2004 • Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2007 • The organic products (Imports from Third countries) Regulations 2003 • The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) Documented procedures are in place for the enforcement of the legislation relating to imported Products of Animal Origin (POAO) and imported Food Not of Animal Origin (FNOA).
4.0 RESOURCES	The Food Safety Service financial costs are contained
4.1 Financial	The Food Safety Service financial costs are contained

Allocation

within the main "Health Services" budget.

The total cost of the Food Safety Service is £190,521 which comprises of the following:

Staff & associated costs - £140,080

Equipment, materials, sampling

Specialist fees etc. - £13,300 Health Management/Administration - £37,141

4.2 Staffing Allocation

Staff resources for food safety matters are provided from the Commercial Safety Section which consists of:

- Commercial Safety Manager (1FTE)
- 4 Senior Environmental Health Officers (2.5 FTE)
- 3 Environmental Health Assistants (1½ FTE)
- 1 Health & Safety Officer (1FTE)

The Commercial Safety Section is responsible for food safety, health and safety, infectious disease control and some public health matters.

The resources allocated from the Commercial Safety Section solely for food safety matters equate to 3.30 FTE. This is comprised of the following:

Commercial Safety Manager (0.5 FTE)

Senior Environmental Health Officers (1.75 FTE)

Environmental Health Assistants (1.05 FTE)

The staffing of the Commercial Safety Section was reduced by 0.5 FTE, with effect from 01-10-09 due to organisational downsizing. This has reduced the level of service available for the key areas of work which are detailed below.

The staffing allocation to key areas of the Food Safety Service is now as follows:

STAFFING ALLOCATION - FOOD SAFETY SERVICE

3.30 FTE 710 Officer Days

		7 10 01110	Ci Days
	Approx	Approx	Approx
	%	FTE	Officer
			Days
Food Hygiene			
Inspections	63	2.0695	445
Food complaints	7	0.219	47
Advice	3	0.1095	23.5
Sampling	6	0.1825	39

I		Food poisoning			
		investigations	6	0.1825	39
		Food Alerts	3	0.1095	23.5
		Liaison with other			
		organisations	4	0.146	31.5
		Food safety promotion	2	0.073	16
		Officer training	1	0.0365	8
		Imported Food	1	0.0365	8
		Food safety management inc Safer Food Better Business	4	0.1355	29
		TOTAL	100	3.30	710
4.3	Staff Development Plan	The Authority, in acco Agency Food Law Co 2008) is committed to propose Safety Service with ongoing/updating training Records of training need as part of the Environ System.	ode of Pra roviding ea a mini ag each yea ds and com	nctice (pul ch membe mum of ar. npetency le	blished June er of the Food 10 hours evels are kept
		Attendance on appropri and is complemented developments during me	by in-hous	se training	g on specific
5.0	QUALITY				
5.1	Quality Assessment	It is our policy to und Safety Service in according to the Environing System.	ordance wi	th the pro	ocedures laid
		The Service is accredite as part of an ove Environmental Health Service	rall Quali		
		External audits by ISO intervals. Internal audit Environmental Health S	s are und		
		Requirements of the Qu work, identification of no out of customer satisfac	on-conform	ances and	
		The Authority is an act Health Lancashire (EHI the Lancashire area a FOG's liaison, training auditing, benchmarking	_) Food Of and is coing, peer	ficers Gro mmitted to review, i	up (FOG) for developing nter-authority
1					

		auditing of the Food Safety Services in Lancashire against the Standard laid down by the Food Standards Agency.	
6.0 REV	/IEW		
6.1 Rev	iew Against Service 1 2009/2010	Performance was monitored in the following way: • Monthly performance figures for the Food Safety Premises Inspection Programme	
		 Submission of performance figures against target figures to members on a quarterly basis Performance was subject to Audit Commission scrutiny and data provided to the Food Standards Agency on an annual basis 	
		 Performance was reviewed at Team Meetings and at the half-yearly Food Quality System Management Reviews. 	
		 Percentage of food premises inspections that should have been carried out and were carried out for all categories premises - 2009/2010 Performance Target 94% Achievement 94% 	
		 Percentage success in responding to food safety service requests within 3 working days. 	
		2010/2011 Performance Target 95% Achievement 90%	
		The Environmental Health Services Quality Management System was formally accredited to the new ISO 9001:2008 Standard in May 2009. The Environmental Health Services Quality Management System now covers food safety, health & safety enforcement, health promotion, environmental protection, pest control, dog control, animal welfare and street scene services.	
		The Environmental Health Services Quality Management System was audited twice during 2009-2010, including a major triennial audit. The Quality System was found to be working satisfactorily and the accreditation to the new ISO 9001:2008 Standard was achieved.	
		Accreditation to this Standard is internationally recognised as showing commitment to quality, customers and a willingness to work towards improving efficiency.	

		Policies, procedures and standards relating to complaints about a third party, requests for service, statutory notifications and referrals to other regulators (on information received where there is wider regulatory interest) are monitored and reported on, and any variations are addressed within this Service Plan.
6.2	Identification Of Any Variations	Some staff absences occurred during 2009-2010 due to long-term sickness.
	From Service Plan 2009/2010	Additional intervention visits to premises were required during 2009-2010, to undertake verifications following 'Safer Food Better Business' mentoring which took place following a successful bid by the Authority to the Food Standards Agency.
		During the year, officers were again involved in work to further develop, maintain and extend the Environmental Health Services Quality Management System, which incorporates the Food Safety Service.
6.3	Areas For Improvement (2010/2011)	The target inspection rate for 2010/2011 is 90%. This target is in line with the stepped improvement targets over the last few years leading up to 100% in recent years, but reduced due to the reduction in staffing following the organisational downsizing in October 2009.
		The target response rate to food safety requests within 3 working days is 95% for 2010/2011.
		To further develop and implement the new M3 computer software system used for the recording, programming and monitoring of the Food Safety Database of Premises and the Food Safety Premises Inspection Programme.
		 To implement the new Food Standards Agency (FSA) Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS). This is a computerised system introduced by the FSA for Local Authorities to provide the FSA with details of their enforcement activities.
		 To develop a methodology for addressing key issues at those premises which do not achieve the level of being 'broadly compliant' so that that this level of compliance can be achieved. Thereby, increasing the percentage of food businesses which are 'broadly compliant'.

- Maintain and develop the food safety part of the Environmental Health Services ISO 9001:2008 Quality Assurance Accreditation.
- To produce at least one Commercial Safety Newsletter for businesses, which will include sections on important food safety issues.
- Further develop and implement, in partnership with the Lancashire County Council Trading Standards Service, the Recipe 4 Health Award Scheme.
- To develop a 'Scores on the Doors' scoring system for food businesses in the area, in line with a national FSA 'Scores on the Doors' scheme.
- To continue to promote the FSA's "Safer Food Better Business" Food Safety Management System

 so as to help businesses sell and produce safe food and comply with new legal requirements.

ORGANISATIONAL CHART FOR THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION (AS AT 05.07.10)

