



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
FOOD SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN
HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, East Cambridgeshire District Council were expected to undertake all official food safety controls and related activities prescribed in specific legislation and those recommended within specific guidance as well as meeting the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice. Like all food safety authorities, we faced significant challenges during the ongoing pandemic with delivering the statutory functions whilst having to prioritise protecting communities from COVID-19. Many food businesses were temporarily closed or changed their operations and routine interventions were put on hold.

Our role remains to help ensure food businesses deliver products which are safe and produced from premises which are hygienic and properly controlled, thereby helping the business to grow and thrive. It is also to provide information to the public to help them make informed choices about what and where to eat.

This year we have had to produce a revised Service Plan setting out our priorities in line with the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) Recovery Plan. This aims to ensure that during the period of recovery from the impact of COVID-19, East Cambridgeshire District Council's food safety resources are targeted towards the food businesses presenting the highest risk to consumers. It also aims to safeguard the credibility of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS). This will be implemented alongside delivery of existing requirements under the FSA's Framework Agreement¹.

The Food Safety Service Delivery Plan will continually be reviewed in light of any new Food Standards Agency requirements. In particular the end of the Recovery Plan and the FSAs plans to implement a revised food hygiene intervention rating scheme expected in year 2023/24.

Liz Knox
Environmental Services Manager

¹ The Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities Amendment No. 5 April 2010

1. SERVICE AIMS & KEY PRIORITIES

1.1. Service Aims

Food Safety inspection and enforcement is undertaken by the Environmental Health Commercial Team (the Team). The aim is to provide a food safety service in East Cambridgeshire that is proportional to the risk presented and consistent in the standards businesses are expected to maintain.

The Team spends time with new businesses to give them the best chance of earning and maintaining a high standard of hygiene compliance, and works with existing businesses with the same aim.

With food businesses being closed or having changed their operations to cope with the various lockdowns and pandemic restrictions, routine interventions were put on hold nationally with the exception of those presenting the highest risk. The Team's workplan has therefore been redrafted to comply with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Recovery Plan for the period from 1 July 2021 to March 2023 which all local authorities must have regard to. The Recovery Plan provides a framework for re-starting the delivery system in line with the Food Law Codes of Practice² for new food establishments and for high-risk and/or non-compliant establishments while providing flexibility for lower risk establishments.

This will be implemented alongside delivery of:

- official controls where the nature and frequency are prescribed in specific legislation,
- reactive work including enforcement in the case of non-compliance, managing food incidents and food hazards,
- investigation into and managing food complaints, and
- sampling in response to emerging issues and in support of national studies.

1.2. Key Priorities

In order to achieve the service aims in line with the FSA Recovery Plan, our key priorities are:

- The completion of Phase 1 which was completed by the end of September 2021
- The completion of Phase 2 which is currently ahead of the targeted completion date of March 2023

An outline of the recovery plan is provided at Figure 1.

The ending of Phase 2 should be coincidental with a revised food hygiene intervention rating scheme being published by the FSA.

² Food Law Code of Practice (England) (March 2021) and Practice Guidance (England) (March 2021)

Figure 1: Outline of the Recovery Plan



Notes

The key milestone dates within the Recovery Plan for higher risk establishments are shown.

For lower risk establishments not shown in the figure, local authorities have the flexibility to defer planned interventions and only undertake intervention where information/intelligence suggests that risks have increased/standards have fallen or if the establishment is otherwise considered a priority for intervention due to the risk posed.

In the case of food standards, the impact on the business of the new requirements on allergen labelling for products prepacked for direct sale - that apply from 1 October 2021 - should also be taken into account.

The table below summarises the frequency of interventions for different risk categories where A is the highest risk

Food hygiene

Risk category	Minimum intervention frequency
A	At least every 6 months.
B	At least every 12 months.
C	At least every 18 months.
D	At least every 24 months.
E	A programme of alternative enforcement strategies or interventions every three years.

In addition, our service priorities are:

- To ensure that interventions are carried out commensurate with the principles of risk ensuring compliance with the relevant food laws.
- To ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that imported food used or sold in premises within the District complies with all relevant Food Law.
- To ensure food complaints are investigated.

- To undertake a food sampling regime based on local and national priorities.
- To provide informed and helpful advice to businesses and the public alike on matters relating to food safety.
- To act on food safety alerts promptly and in a manner that is proportionate to the risks involved.
- To play an active role with neighbouring local authorities in order to ensure a consistent approach to food law enforcement.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. District Profile

East Cambridgeshire District is one of 5 Cambridgeshire District Councils and we also align with Peterborough City Council. Intelligence gained through the Covid Pandemic work indicated that a large number of people living in East Cambridgeshire work outside of the district, with Cambridge and the surrounding science parks being a particular draw. The District has a population of circa 90,000³.

2.2. Organisational Structure

The Commercial Team sits within the Environmental Services Department. The departmental lead is the Environmental Services Manager who in turn reports to the Director of Operations. The Environmental Services Department, reports to the Operational Services Committee.

Reporting to the Environmental Services Manager is the Senior Environmental Health Officer (SEHO) who is designated as the Lead Food Officer. They undertake the day-to-day supervision of the Commercial Team as well as contributing to inspection and complaint investigations. The Team are responsible for the Council's enforcement role in relation to food hygiene, health and safety and infection control aspects of public health legislation.

Officers are authorised to undertake a range of food health and safety and public health enforcement according to their job profile, competence and experience.

Working closely within a small authority, the Team liaises with Licensing, Building Control, the Markets Team, Waste Management, and Ely Tourism.

2.3. External Partners

External to the Council, the Team have an authorised Public Analyst (PA) with the role currently being undertaken by Public Analysts Scientific Services Ltd and a Food Examiner service undertaken by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)⁴ at Colindale.

³ Population Estimates for UK, England and Wales, Mid-2019". Office for National Statistics.

⁴ The UK Health Security Agency was formally known as Public Health England (PHE)

Food Standards work, including new controls on Food Allergen Controls are administered by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards. This split is due to the legislation.

The Team liaises with neighbouring districts, both directly and through regular regional Cambridgeshire Food and Safety Group meetings, Representatives from UKHSA, Trading Standards (TS), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and FSA also attend the Group meetings.

Heads of Service attend strategic meetings at a county level.

Liaison and working alongside other authorities is undertaken as required.

Officers attend the Safety Advisory Group meetings allowing work with emergency services and other County representative on larger events. No special resources are needed to undertake this liaison.

2.4. Scope of the Food Service

The Environmental Health Commercial Team is responsible for delivering the Authority's Food Safety Service. This includes:

- programmed and intelligence led food hygiene interventions and revisits
- the investigation of complaints regarding food sold or prepared in the District
- the investigation of complaints regarding hygiene standards or practices
- infectious disease control including food poisoning and food borne disease
- responding to food alerts issued by the Food Standards Agency
- the provision of advice and information on food safety issues
- the monitoring of existing approved premises as well as granting new approval applications.
- consideration of planning and licensing applications in relation to food premises
- routine/planned sampling programmes organised in liaison with the Cambridgeshire Food and Safety Group and national studies organised by the FSA/UKHSA and local need.
- imported food control

All the officers who deliver services within the Team also

- hazard spot in relation to health & safety issues, and
- prioritise health and safety inspections when linked with the Health and Safety Executive's national priorities.

2.5. Demands on the Food Service

The Team are responsible for 839 premises, ranging from large manufacturers to one-person operations. A breakdown of the premises is as follows:

Type of Premises	Number
Producers	10
Manufacturers / Packers	37
Import / Export	3
Distributer	20
Retailer	157
Caterer	612
Total	839

Of these premises, approximately 270 are due for inspection each year. In addition, we also get around 100 new businesses per annum to inspect, although in 2021/22 we have received over 140 applications. In addition, the team receives requests for a food hygiene re-rating inspections per annum (Food businesses are able to request a re-rating after they have made improvements). There is a charge of £137 (reviewed annually) for this service as it requires an additional inspection to be carried out.

The Environmental Health Commercial Team is responsible for 8 premises under Approved Premises Regulations. These are typically food businesses that make, prepare or handle meat, dairy, egg, fish, shellfish or animal produce for supply to other businesses. These premises are inspected in accordance with our risk rating programme.

Other factors are likely to have an impact on Food Safety Service Delivery in the short to medium term, for example;

- a review of our working procedures with Officers benefiting from a more flexible and remote way of working;
- demands around health & safety enforcement with the Health and Safety Executive relaunching national priorities;
- industry staff shortages which affect a businesses ability to retain the right number of quality staff to maintain targets
- a reduction in food hygiene standards in some business which increases the Officer's workload in terms of revisits and subsequent requests for rescores.

2.6. Access to the Service

Inspections typically take place during weekday, office hours; but evening and weekend inspections and advisory visits are made where the business does not open at other times. In accordance with the FSA Food Law Code of Practice, inspections are without prior warning. However, inspections may be made by appointment where a business does not open at set times or officers need to meet with a particular person or see a particular operation.

Where a food business is based in residential premises, officers must give 24 hours' notice of entry. The Team does not have a safety enforcement responsibility in dwellings.

Access for service users	Details
Office address: The Grange Nutholt Lane Ely Cambridgeshire CB7 4EE	Opening Hours 08:45 - 17.00 Monday to Thursday 08.45 - 16.30 on Fridays
Day time telephone number	01353 665555
Email	foodandsafety@eastcambs.gov.uk
Council website	www.eastcambs.gov.uk
Out of hours contact	07710 978 900

2.7. Challenges

The FSA recovery roadmap takes account of some of the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent backlog of food safety interventions however, local complexities may present due to:

- The numbers of 'new' food businesses significantly increasing with over 140 being received in 2021/2022. 'New' business may be a change in the ownership of an existing business, or a completely new enterprise. Of the latter some may never start trading whilst others may quickly cease trading. The risks associated with these businesses remain largely unknown until inspected.
- Some existing businesses may hope to grow and capitalise on potential additional trade if consumer confidence returns, or to take advantage of new opportunities.
- the food hygiene intervention rating scheme will be reviewed and revised for implementation in 2023/24. This means that during this period there will be a significant amount of work for all Local Authorities and the FSA to undertake in preparation.

It is recognised that uncertainties related to the course of the pandemic may yet have consequences for deployment of resources and delivery of food controls. Whilst it is not expected, this risk must be considered in the short term.

We have planned a strategy that will see the Council meet all of the key dates within the FSA's roadmap whilst still allowing time to cope with the challenges outlined above. That strategy must be flexible to cope with the demands that are outside of our direct control.

2.8. **Enforcement Policy**

The Council has signed up to follow the principles laid out in the Government's Regulator's Code⁵ and the principles contained therein. A service specific Enforcement Policy has been developed and is available on the Council's website.

Officers always aim to support and guide businesses in compliance with food laws. Where advice and guidance and an informal route fails, Officers will use a graduated approach in enforcement following the ECDC Food Safety Enforcement Policy.

3. **SERVICE DELIVERY**

3.1. **Food Premises Interventions**

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, one of this Service Plan's key priorities was to ensure that all businesses receive an intervention within the minimum frequency set down in the current Food Law - Code of Practice.

The category of the premises, i.e. A - E, is defined by scoring premises around potential hazard associated with the business and food safety compliance, this then relates to the interval between inspections. For example: Category A premises are inspected every 6 months and Category D every 2 years. As the category is determined by risk to food safety it is possible for a business to move up or down the scale as they improve food hygiene practices, or present different risks in the food produced.

Challenges created by the pandemic meant that priority was given to the most high-risk/non-compliant food premises (categories A-B) and new businesses that had not previously been inspected. The FSA accepted and directed that food premises in categories C - E would not receive the expected intervention within the minimum frequency as set down in the Code of Practice

Before March 2023 the Team plan to catch up with the inspections as set out by the key dates FSA Recovery Plan as outlined on Page 6. As of March 2022 there are around 300 programmed inspections for Cat A-D food premises. This number includes recently inspected Category A and B premises that will become due for a further intervention before March 2023. There are also about 50 new businesses that have yet to be inspected and risk rated.

At the end of Phase 2 of the Recovery Plan (March 2023) we anticipate having caught up with all inspections and be in a position to move forward ensuring that within our ongoing programme of food interventions our businesses receive an intervention within the minimum frequency set down in Code of Practice.

The following is a breakdown of categories of risk; frequency of intervention and number of premises within the District due before March 2023.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulators-code>

Rating	Frequency of Inspection	Number of Premises as of (March 2022)
A	6 months	3
B	12 months	25
C	18 months	71
D	24 months	218
Total		317

In addition to visits undertaken as part of the risk assessment programme, interventions are also undertaken in respect of:

- complaints regarding food business operations;
- enquires and request for advice from a food business;
- investigation following a poor sampling result;
- transient stalls and mobiles including working with the Ely Markets team;
- new business operations or new proprietors.

The range of possible interventions allows authorised Officers to use their professional judgement to apply a proportionate level of regulatory and enforcement activity to each business. Interventions fall into either official control or non-official control as follows:

Official Control interventions	Interventions which are not Official Controls: -
Monitoring	targeted education & advice
Surveillance	information & intelligence gathering
Verification	
Audit	
Inspection	
Sampling and Analysis	

We aim to inspect new high-risk businesses registering with the authority within 28 days of the business opening for trading or sooner if requested. Low risk new businesses e.g. home bakers will be given less priority and initially targeted through remote interventions.

3.2. Primary Authority and Home Authority Principle

The Primary Authority Scheme is managed by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The Primary Authority scheme enables businesses to form a legal

partnership with one local authority, which then provides assured advice on complying with regulations that other local regulators must respect. If a business has a Primary Authority partnership Officer's must use any published inspection plans and have due regard to any assured guidance agreed under the scheme.

Primary Authority (PA) partnerships are suitable for businesses with multiple sites ensuring consistency of enforcement across the country. Due to the nature of ECDC's largely small, independent businesses culture, it is not predicted that the Team will form a Primary Authority partnership with a business in the foreseeable future.

If no Primary Authority arrangement has been established, Multi-site Businesses are able to build up a relationship with, and receive advice and information, from one particular local authority. This is usually a local authority where the business' head office is based and that authority is referred to as the 'Home Authority'. No inspection plan is published under this scheme and any guidance issued is not given the same weight as through the Primary Authority but should still be followed.

The Team acts as the Originating Authority for our Approved Establishments and any businesses supplying food outside the district. At the request of another regulatory authority, the Team will give appropriate information and assistance.

3.3. Advice to Businesses

The district has a high proportion of small, independent businesses that do not have the technical support usually associated with big companies. Therefore, and in keeping with the Council's "open for business" ethos and business growth policy, the emphasis of the Team is to work with businesses and develop positive working relationships. Officers are willing to invest significant time on advice and guidance to both support enterprise and maintain compliance; and in doing so avoid the need for future formal action.

Special emphasis continues to be placed on disseminating the FSA guidance on preventing E coli 0157 in local food businesses, both before businesses open and at the time of inspection. Advice packs are sent out to new businesses and businesses are signposted to the Council's webpages which contain links to the FSA's site.

3.4. Food Sampling

The microbiological and physical examination and analysis of food is undertaken on the basis of: -

- businesses identified for sampling as part of nationwide, regional or local projects;
- businesses subject to consumer complaints or linked with outbreak investigations;
- or during a programmed inspection were an inspector deems a sample is necessary.

The Council supports all relevant nationally co-ordinated food sampling programmes organised by the Food Standard Agency and the UKHSA as well as any relevant cross regional surveys.

Due to laboratory resources being diverted to the Covid-19 pandemic there was no planned food sampling programme for 2020/21. However, plans have been introduced in 2022 to partake in 2 national sampling projects.

3.5. Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Diseases

Investigation of outbreaks will be in accordance with the UKHSA Communicable Disease Outbreak Management Plan. All infectious disease notifications are followed-up by a standard letter and questionnaire wherever practicable to identify possible sources of infection and recommend practices to prevent its spread.

There has been a reduction in the number of food poisonings reported to the Team because cases of Campylobacter are no longer reported and the change in consumer behaviour during the pandemic. As a result of this all cases of reported food poisoning are now investigated to some degree even though they tend to be isolated incidence with no clear infection source.

3.6. Food Safety Incidents

The Council complies with Food Safety Act Code of Practice in relation to handling food alerts. All officers within the Team are alerted to food alerts via Food Standards Agency E-mail alerts. We respond to all food alerts that require action within 1 working day.

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.1. Overview

Whilst the responsibility for managing health and safety risks lies with the individual business, ECDC has a statutory responsibility for safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of employees and the public, in many businesses located within the District.

Under section 18(4) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, a duty is placed on ECDC to make “adequate arrangements” for the enforcement of health and safety. These “arrangements” are set out in The National Local Authority Enforcement Code 2013. The Code is a framework ensuring LA regulators adopt a consistent and proportionate approach to enforcement and directs that business operating in comparatively lower risk premises should not be subject to proactive, unannounced inspections, unless there is real and proportionate reason to suspect poor performance (“no inspection without a reason”).

A business can make a complaint to the Council and to the Independent Regulatory Panel if it believes that the Code has not been followed. This has reduced the number of proactive inspections.

Enforcement of health and safety in businesses is divided between the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities under The Health and Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1998 and examples of these are as follows:

LA enforcement	HSE enforcement
Offices (not LA or government)	Factories
Shops and retail premises	Farms
Hotels, restaurants, pubs, clubs	Gas, electricity and water service providers
Leisure premises	Garages undertaking repairs/ MOTs
Care homes, sheltered accommodation	Nursing homes, hospitals
Nurseries and playgroups	Schools and places of education
Skin piercers and beauty sector	Construction sites
Storage warehouses	Warehouses (mainly distribution)
Zoos	Government / LA undertakings
Churches and places of worship	Offshore installations

Local businesses may come to the Team's attention through complaints, reports, referrals, and national intelligence. In addition the HSE issues Local Authority Circulars (LAC) on topic areas considered suitable for Local Authority proactive and project work. The current document is LAC 67(2) revision 7.

Accidents may be reported to the Council through service requests or formally under The Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (as amended). Any accidents are investigated according to the HSE LAC 22/13: Incident selection criteria.

The Team reacts to referrals from engineers reporting unsafe lifting equipment.

Officers attend the regular Safety Advisory Group meetings (SAG) supporting event organisers and businesses with advice, before, during and after the meetings. Officers also attend the regional Food and Health and Safety Group meetings, share information with the group and use it to undertake peer reviews.

The Team disseminates information about health and safety as a result of alerts from the HSE Advice is given any business seeking support.

The Team will refer any matters of potential national significance to the HSE and reports its activities to the HSE annually.

4.2. Primary and Home Authority

As with Section 3.2 above, the principles of Primary and Home Authority relate to Health and Safety Enforcement as well as Food Safety. For the same reasons as above ECDC does not have a primary authority agreement with a business but Officers will use primary authority plans where they exist.

4.3. Targeting inspections

The Team uses LAC 67(2) as its framework for its daily activities and work plans. Notified incidents and complaints are investigated as stated above. Sources to help target the work of the team come from working relationships with other regulators such as fire, ambulance, police; building control, licensing etc. allowing intelligence to be shared at SAG meetings and at other times. The Team receives alerts from the fire service and HSE. In this small, local authority, officers liaise with colleagues directly in areas such as building control and licensing.

Other sources of work and intelligence include; officers hazard spotting at food inspections, regional meetings with other LAs and the HSE local principal inspector, Social media, local press, and on-line resources.

In 2021/2023, the Team will:

- Investigate all fatalities and major accidents where ECDC is the enforcing authority.
- Investigate other accidents reported under RIDDOR* having regard to the HSE incident selection criteria.

- Investigate allegations of poor health and safety standards/complaints, having regard to the HSE incident selection guidance.
- Continue to raise health and safety standards in businesses as part of other inspections and visits such as food hygiene inspections.
- Investigate adverse lift reports sent in by engineers.
- Offer advisory visits to skin piercing premises in relation to the maintenance of autoclaves and management of infection control. This is in addition to the routine offer of support and guidance to skin piercing establishments at the time of registration applications.
- Update the Council's Health and Safety web pages.
- Host a relevant training course for ECDC and external LA officers using an external trainer.
- Continue to attend SAG, the Council's internal health and safety committee meetings and the Cambridgeshire Food Health and Safety Group.
- Refer emerging safety issues to the HSE.

4.4. Competencies and procedures

Officers are responsible for maintaining their competency by way of personal study, taking part in on line training and webinars. Where external training is undertaken officers share this with other Team members, normally at monthly team meetings.

Officers "buddy" during accident and complaint investigations, where necessary, to help maintain knowledge and practical skills. Officers have targets for maintaining competencies that are reviewed at regular one to ones and at annual appraisals.

Health and safety Notices are issued having regard to the Enforcement Policy and for health and safety, the HSE Enforcement Management Model (EMM). Health and safety and food safety Notices are reviewed by the SEHO before service.

5. **RESOURCES**

5.1. **Financial Allocation**

The budgets for the Commercial Team are shown below.

2022/23 Budgets			
Costc	Costc(T)	Account(T)	Approved budget
EH004	Env Health - Safety	Basic Salary	24,468.00
EH004	Env Health - Safety	Staff Mileage	500.00
			24,968.00

Costc	Costc(T)	Account(T)	Approved budget
EH003	Env Health - Food	Basic Salary	180,985.00
EH003	Env Health - Food	Staff Mileage	7,000.00
EH003	Env Health - Food	Equipment - Purchases	492.00
EH003	Env Health - Food	Materials - Purchase	50.00
EH003	Env Health - Food	Protective Clothing	60.00
EH003	Env Health - Food	Printing & Stationery	100.00
EH003	Env Health - Food	Publications & books	200.00
EH003	Env Health - Food	Food & Drug Sampling	200.00
EH003	Env Health - Food	Fees & Charges	0.00
EH003	Env Health - Food	Food Hygiene Course	0.00
EH003	Env Health - Food	Expected Income	-4,000.00
			185,087.00

Office accommodation, IT and basic equipment such as torches, temperature probes, printing etc, are included in overheads. Samples are submitted to UKHSA without charge within the Authority's allocation.

Funds would need to be allocated for

- non-routine, microbiological; compositional or other analytical samples.
- any documents that require translation or where interpreting skills are needed.
- any legal proceedings, the costs being met from within the wider Departmental budget.

Any such draw would be met from the wider departmental budgets.

5.2. **Staffing Allocation**

The work of the Team is carried out by the officers and a part-time administrator, supported as needed by the Council's Legal, Reprographics, General Office, Customer, and ICT Services.

All officers carrying out enforcement duties are registered with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health itself or its Registration Board (EHRB). Each enforcement officer is authorised in accordance with the standards and requirements of the respective legislation, FSA Food Law Code of Practice, and the minutes of the Council.

The Team consists of a full time Senior Environmental Health Officer, 1.8 Full time equivalent (FTE) EHOs and a Food Safety Officer. They are supported by 0.5 FTE administrative support.

The Team have previously employed contractors to cover vacancies and maternity leave, though none are currently being employed. In the case of an extreme event or outbreak, the Team can seek additional resources from officers in the Environmental Services' Domestic Team.

5.3. **Staff Development Plan**

All officers are appropriately qualified according to the Food Law Code of Practice and maintain their competencies. Officers undertake personal study and there is a culture of sharing knowledge and "buddying" colleagues at interventions for food within the Team. Maintaining competencies in Approved establishments is not only by "buddying" in the district but maybe sought via neighbouring authorities.

Each officer is responsible for the maintenance of their personal Continual Professional Development (CPD) records, subject to the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.

Staff development for the service includes:

- Maintenance and evidence of formal qualification and CPD. Undertaking in-house or external competency-based training. This includes webinars and other on-line training.
- Officers undertaking external training are required to feed this back to the team members after the event.
- The undertaking of "buddying" or mentoring with qualified or officer with different experience in food or health and safety.

6. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

6.1. Consistency

The Team is monitored for consistency by the Lead Food Officer and is subject to Peer Review by the Regional Food Group. The following monitoring arrangements are currently in place to assist in the quality assessment of the work carried out by the food team :-

- sample accompanied interventions
- sample audits of food files and associated paperwork
- sample review of post intervention enforcement action being taken
- performance and development reviews
- performance monitoring of target response times
- team meetings

7. REVIEW

7.1. Review against Service Plans

The process of review would typically commence at the end of March each year and would focus on the yearly figures in comparison with the output from previous years. Using an average of the workload demands from the previous year, an attempt would be made to judge the expected demand over the next 12 months.

The issues and challenges of the pandemic have reduced the benefit of such review and planning because inspections have been curtailed. In addition, consumer habits have changed which has resulted in fewer service requests over all.

Regular reviews against the overall objectives of this Service Plan will be undertaken based on: -

- performance and resources available over the previous 12 months,
- responses to feedback from local businesses and the community,
- observations from Members and the Environmental Health Commercial Team,
- and advice and guidance issued by the Food Standards Agency.