



## **SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

### **FOOD SAFETY ENFORCEMENT**

# **FOOD SAFETY ENFORCEMENT SERVICE PLAN YEAR 2009-2010**

**APRIL 2009**

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## **FOOD SAFETY ENFORCEMENT**

## **FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT SERVICE PLAN**

### **1.0 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **1.1 Aims**

To discharge the statutory function and responsibilities of existing and proposed food safety legislation by providing sufficient enforcement activity, advice and education in the field of food safety, to remove ill health and injuries from food and associated activities.

#### **Objectives**

To carry out a planned programme of food premise interventions on a prioritised risk assessment basis; to maintain a register of food businesses; to respond to food complaints; prevent and control the spread of food borne illness; carry out proactive sampling in accordance with national and local programmes and to promote food safety by education and any other means to business and the public.

**Note: This document also incorporates those areas of work activity, which are closely linked to food safety such as water supplies and infectious diseases.**

#### **1.2 Vision**

Our vision is: ***“To provide brilliant services to our customers”***

#### **Values**

Our values describe the type of organisation we want to be:

- ***Listening***.... Taking views into account and demonstrating a passion for customer service.
- ***Learning***....Being open and honest and learning from things that go well and not so well
- ***Delivering***....Innovating and making a difference

#### **Priorities and Equalities Statement**

A review of Council priorities has taken place and Food Safety will generally fall under the Quality Living and Good for Business priorities. The need to comply with equalities policies of the Council is noted. We will treat all customers fairly regardless of their gender, age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religious or other beliefs, or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified. Whenever possible, functions covered by this document will be provided in such a way as to maximise their contribution to Council priorities.

Food Safety Enforcement is an important part of the Council's activity, especially as food growing, preparation, production and retailing form a very significant part of the economic and social well being of the District. Several of the major employers of people in the District are now food producers, for example, until recently two factories in the Grantham area provide direct employment for over 1,700 people. The closure of Fenland Foods has resulted in the loss of over 700 jobs.

The last 25 years has seen a dramatic increase in the number of leisure and cultural facilities in the District and in very many cases these are associated with the consumption of food and drink. The trading environment in the District now provides for a diverse variety of food outlets, which are of benefit to local residents and visitors.

All these activities are providing both direct and indirect employment and assist in providing enhanced economic activity, improved quality of life, the continued well being of the area, potential access to a healthy and fulfilled lifestyle and low levels of unemployment.

Part I of The Local Government Act 2000 placed a duty on local authorities, having consulted with its partners to prepare "Community Strategies" and gives powers to promote local "well being". The development of such a strategy by the District Council and its partners has been completed. Links between this document and the Healthy Living sub group of the LSP are noted, as is the contribution this plan can make towards the county's Sustainable Communities Strategy and the local SKDC chapter of this.

### **1.3 Value for Money**

South Kesteven District Council is fully committed to best value and the securing of continuous improvement in the exercise of all its functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. These principles are continuously applied within the healthy communities service. The ongoing implications of the Hampton Review and the flexible and targeted approach advocated are also noted and incorporated later in this document

New national Indicators are now in place(see para 2.8). The District Council is committed to achieving a high level of compliance with these indicators.

### **1.4 Basis for Service Provision**

Food Safety is a statutory responsibility placed on Local Authorities and the standards expected by Central Government are set out in a Code of Practice made under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990, Regulation 24 Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 and Regulation 6 of The Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2006. A revised code and guidance has recently been issued.

## **Links to Healthy Environment Joint Service Plan**

This document sets out in greater detail the broad content contained in the Service Plan.

### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

#### **2.1 Profile and Demographics of South Kesteven District Council**

The population of the District is 131,000. This figure is subject to increase during the summer months with Stamford being a significant tourism attraction.

The District covers an area of 364 square miles or 94,340 hectares in the South Western part of Lincolnshire bordered by Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Rutland and Nottinghamshire. It is by linear measurement a maximum distance of approximately 45 miles, north to south and 20 miles east to west. The District is mixed urban and rural with four main population centres located at Grantham, Stamford, Bourne and the Deepings. Healthy Communities is located at Grantham, which is approximately 30 miles by road from the Deepings and 20 miles from Stamford and Bourne. Urban areas account for 3.5% of the area of the District. Large numbers of food businesses are situated a distance from the offices at Grantham and travelling is therefore a significant factor. There has been a noticeable increase in migrant workers during the past few years and this in turn is leading to an increase in ethnic food businesses of varying types. The recent economic down turn has also resulted in increased numbers of enquiries regarding setting up small scale food businesses.

#### **2.2 Organisational Structure**

Food Safety is the responsibility of the Healthy Communities Service Manager and this service is located in the corporate area of Healthy Environment. A Team Leader who leads on food matters has been appointed. Liaison arrangements are in place with the Lincolnshire County Council and other bodies such as Primary Care Trusts, The Health Protection Agency, DEFRA, The Meat Hygiene Service and Anglian Water. A Public Analyst (PA) has been jointly appointed with Lincolnshire County Council Trading Standards Department and is used by this authority together with the Health Protection Laboratory Service for food examination.

#### **2.3 Contractor/In-house Service Provision**

During the period 2009/10 it is proposed to contract out approx 175 partial inspections, normally of category "C" premises (medium to low risk). All contractors used will have to satisfy the section as to their qualifications and competency and comply with service policy, including the corporate equality scheme. In order to maintain the quality of service the Council retains the inspection of high-risk premises by its officers to ensure resources are targeted on categories of premises where risks have been identified.

## **2.4 Functions Covered by Service Plan**

This document incorporates the service delivery plans for all food safety functions carried out by the Council and furthermore includes the delivery plans for private and public water supplies and infectious diseases, even those not necessarily spread by means of food or water. Food and water sampling is included.

## **2.5 Scope of the Food Service and “Choosing Health”**

The food safety service is provided by a multi-function team of qualified officers, within Healthy Communities who are also responsible for delivering the following services:

- Health & Safety at Work Enforcement
- Licensing of Skin Piercing
- Community Leisure
- “Choosing Health”
- Infectious Disease Control
- Private/Public Water Supply Monitoring
- Shops Act Enforcement
- Corporate Health and Safety

The Council is responsible for enforcement of all food safety matters with the exception of those involving product labelling, weights & measures, and animal food stuffs, which are dealt with by the Lincolnshire County Council Trading Standards Department. In addition to the above, the PCT as part of the Government’s “Choosing Health” initiative are making funds available for various projects including nutritional health and the promotion of physical activity. This funding has enabled 2 additional members of staff to be appointed. This additional resource will supplement the existing work of the service in furtherance of the Quality Living priority. Our involvement in this area of work will have no detrimental effect upon the statutory duties of the Council.

A large scale survey of commercial businesses in the district was undertaken in year 2008/09 this has resulted in over 700 businesses being identified as requiring a visit for health and safety purposes. This additional work will be phased into service work plans and has the potential to impact on the areas of work outlined in this document. ( see para 2.8 note 1)

## **2.6 Demands on the Food Service**

### **Premises Profile**

Food business are assessed and scored after each inspection in line with guidance given in Code of Practice. These scores categorise the businesses into risk bands, Band “A” being the highest risk and most frequently visited. The new

code has introduced the term “intervention” and categorised interventions as including activity such as inspections, monitoring, verifications, sampling etc. Interventions due by hazard the period 2009/10, as at 1 April 2009 are as follows.

## RISK CATEGORIES

Risk Category	Intervention frequency Months)	Type of intervention due 2009/10		
		Inspections	Verification visits	*Alternative enforcement interventions
A	6	8		
B	12	59		
C	18	27	278	
D	24		35	35
E	36			223
UNRATED (ex new businesses)				91
OUTSIDE inspection				7
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>94</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>356</b>

1,307 businesses currently trading are included in the FSA list from which the programme of **763** hazard interventions for the year **2009/10** is generated.

There are an additional 150 premises previously used as food businesses but closed. Based on last year it is anticipated that approximately **90** premises will reopen or be converted to be used as food businesses. These are monitored and new food businesses are required to register before opening. If opened, these businesses will be added to the visit programme. There has been a recent increase in requests for advice regarding setting up of small scale food businesses this thought to be driven by the current economic down turn.

The following premises are registered, approved or licensed

Food Registered	<b>1307</b>
Approved or awaiting approval	<b>8</b>
Seasonal Poultry slaughter Houses	<b>1</b>

In addition it should be noted that, within the District very large scale processing of salads and vegetables for national and international consumption is carried out. In addition there is a very large scale repackaging process of vegetables. Four large cold stores are also situated in the Grantham and Bourne areas. A large chicken product manufacturer is located at Grantham and supplies national chains such as

KFC, and McDonalds. A large meat preparations processor has also recently been transferred to SKDC for enforcement from the Meat Hygiene Service. Certificates for food exports to non-EU countries are also issued for foods from large manufacturers and these will require visits.

### **Service Availability and Access to Services**

Healthy Communities is based at the Grantham Office operating within the hours of 8.45am - 5.15pm Monday to Thursday and 4.45pm on Fridays. A facility for emergency contact with officers out of office hours is in place via the Helpline service. Out of office hours visits to premises are regularly carried out in order to assess standards of hygiene at the time the business is trading. In addition, officers' telephones are set up to receive text messages out of hours from the FSA with respect to food incidents (see para 3.7). We are committed to ensuring equal access to our services from all sections of our community. the use of interpreters and or language line service will be utilised where necessary, and written information will be provided in large print Braille , audio CD, and other languages where required.

### **2.7 Enforcement Policy**

A documented Enforcement Policy has been produced and approved by the Council. In addition, the Council has signed up to the "Enforcement Concordat" as promoted by the Cabinet Office. All officers are expected to act in accordance with this policy and procedures are in place to assess and monitor compliance with the policy. The policy is available for local businesses to view and has been widely circulated.

## 2.8 Performance Measures

A review of performance monitoring measures has been undertaken and the following are in place for 2009/10.

	<u>Target</u>
• Achievement of inspections due by hazards to satisfy Code of Practice	<b>95%*</b>
• Number of “hits” on the Healthy Communities web area	<b>15,000</b>
• Percentage of food businesses that are broadly compliant with food legislation (new NI)	<b>90%</b>
• Satisfaction of businesses with local authority regulation Services (new NI)	<b>80%</b>
• Complaints against the service expressed as % of customer contact	<b>&lt;0.02</b>
• Service requests response times	<b>90% within 3 days</b>
• Non business service users very or fairly satisfied	<b>85%</b>
• Infectious disease response times	<b>80% within 1 day, 100% 3 days</b>

**Note:** (1) \* Food inspections due by hazard target has been reduced from 99% to 95% in response to capacity concerns, following projected additional work demands within the service in respect of health and safety enforcement .

(2) The FSA have indicated that they will be introducing an additional indicator for food businesses which are “highly compliant”. Draft proposals have been assessed and SKDC compliance would be currently at 75%. Confirmation of details from the FSA are awaited.

Other Contextual Information:

- Timely production of statistical returns to the FSA
- Number of food business having SFBB in place
- Number of ethnic businesses having SFBB in place
- Number of food business with three or more star rating
- Full compliance with the Enforcement Policy
- Regular re-tendering of the Private Water Supplies analysis contract
- Sampling of Private Water Supplies in accordance with statute

## **2.9 Food Standards Agency and LBRO**

The service is required to make available information to the Food Standards agency (FSA) detailing inspections, enforcement, sampling and educational activities undertaken. The FSA has the power to set standards and monitor local authority food law activity. In addition the FSA carries out audits of local authorities to assess compliance with standards set. An audit of the Council's use of contractors was carried out in year 2008/09. The matters raised were addressed by an action plan.

The Local Authority Better Regulation (LBRO) unit has recently come into force. This body has been created to address perceived inconsistencies across local authority regulation of business. Businesses can now ask a local authority to act as a "primary authority" for them. Under this arrangement the local authority would act as a central point of advice but could agree a fee with the business for this service. The LBRO will act as an arbitration service where disputes arise between businesses who have a primary authority agreement and local authorities. The full impact of this new body upon the Council has yet to be fully understood.

## **3.0 SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **3.1 Food Premises Interventions Programme**

It is the Council's policy to ensure that an inspection programme is established and maintained for food premises. The premises will be inspected no less than in accordance with the minimum requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice.

A documented procedure for the inspection of food premises is in place. The importance of food hygiene training and businesses understanding and implementing documented systems based on the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system is emphasised in our guidance. It is section policy to enforce HACCP and documented systems at our food businesses in a proportional manner. To ensure consistency and proportionality, a five step approach has been adopted to assess compliance with this requirement. Where appropriate, the Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) system advocated by the Food standards Agency is promoted.

Only officers qualified and experienced in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice shall be authorised to carry out food safety interventions. A documented policy for the appointment and authorisation of officers is in place.

## **Premises Profile at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009**

Primary producer	3
Manufacturers and packers	44
Importers/exporters	2
Distributors/transporters	25
Retailers	258
Restaurants and caterers	975

## **Projected Food Business Inspections by Hazard Scores**

Projected visits calculated in accordance with Food Standards Agency (FSA) Guidance indicate that **763** interventions will be generated by hazard scores in the next 12 Month period.

## **Additional Food Business Inspections**

In addition to those inspections identified in 3 above several inspections will be generated as follows:

Not notwithstanding the minimum frequencies set out in FSA Code of Practice, the following premises are inspected on an annual basis:

- (a) Seasonal Poultry Slaughterhouse x 1
- (b) Large NHS hospital x1

The following premises are subject to an intervention on a 6 monthly basis:

- (a) Large Food Producers x 6

In addition to the above, new premises, premises under new ownership and those reopening after closure will require inspection. Estimated as **90**

**Total number of food businesses at which a food hygiene intervention inspection, verification or alternative enforcement intervention will be carried out in the next 12 month period is estimated as 860**

## **Other Visits/Interventions to Food Businesses**

Food revisits to check on required works are scheduled in accordance with service policy. On the basis of the previous year, the number of revisits projected for the

year 2009/10 is **194**. In addition **269** survey/sampling and advice visits are projected.

**The total number of other visits/Interventions to food businesses scheduled in the next 12 month period is estimated as 463.**

### **Specialist Areas of Food Safety Enforcement**

Factories producing specialised foods eg salads, bean sprouts, vegetables, ready meals, poultry products and meat products or preparations are inspected by dedicated staff with experience and expertise in the production of the products concerned. The necessary requirements for competency are set out in the service authorisation policy.

All other premises are inspected by officers holding the necessary qualifications, as required by Code of Practice.

#### **(a) Approval of Manufacturing/Processing Premises**

Regulations made under EU Law require that certain premises dealing with:

- Meat and Meat Products
- Fish and Fish Products
- Dairy Products
- Other Products of animal origin

must be approved by the Food Authority

The approval process is complex and involves close involvement with the business throughout the various stages of planning the facility, processes and product launch. Immediately prior to opening, a very detailed audit must take place before the final approval number can be issued and food can be released for human consumption.

The unique premises approval number, which is applied to the packaging, enables food to be distributed throughout the EU and the UK without further restriction.

Major refurbishment and extensions of production facilities, which are already approved, must go through a similar process before launching product from the altered factory or premises.

#### **(b) Approval of non approved Manufacturing/Processing Premises**

Premises not covered by Approvals do not require an official approval number but will nevertheless need to satisfy the Food Authority that they comply with the

relevant regulations prior to producing food. The process is therefore similar to that used for approved premises.

## **Resources**

Time allocated to the inspection of premises and administration of the interventions is projected for the year 2009/10 as 560 hours and 540 hours respectively. Time allocated to revisits at premises and administration of revisits by practitioners is projected as 500 hours.

Note: Not including travelling and does **not** include contractors' time and based on figures for 2008/09.

### **3.2 Foodstuffs Complaints and other requests**

It is this authority's policy to ensure that all relevant food complaints are appropriately investigated and dealt with, having regard to the Food Safety Act 1990 the Code of Practice, and guidance issued by the Food Standards Agency and LACORS.

Officers are required to operate in accordance with the service procedure, which includes response times for various complaints.

Depending on the complexity of the food complaint, the investigation process will vary considerably. In almost all cases of food premises complaints, a visit to the premises will be necessary.

Referrals to us of foodstuff complaints made under the Home Authority Principle (see para 3.3) can be very complex and often involve detailed inspection and investigation of a food manufacturing plant.

Other foodstuff complaints received and investigated by this office as the investigating authority will often not require a site visit as the food may well have been sold but not produced within the District. Nevertheless, such investigations are often lengthy and time consuming. Many of our complaints relate to food manufactured in South Kesteven.

**The Average Number of Formal Foodstuff Complaints for 2009/10 is estimated to be 90, based on figures for 2008/09.**

## **Service Requests**

Complaints about premises which will require investigation and requests for service which require a response present a significant demand on staff time with **866** being received in year 2008/09. Comprised of

• Food premises complaints	83
• Food stuff complaints	91
• Requests for advice	447
• Other food safety related service requests	145

## **Resources**

Practitioner time recorded as spent on Food Service requests in year 2008/09 was 804 hours approximately 15.5 hours per week. (Not including travelling)

### **3.3 Advice to Business**

It is the policy of the Council to encourage practitioners, whenever possible, to offer advice to businesses, as we see this as the first step towards achieving compliance and to act as enforcement officers, only if this educational approach fails. This graduated policy for enforcement is reinforced in FSA Codes of Practice is recommended by LACORS, and supports the council priority of Good for Business.

Regulations require a minimum of 28 days notice to be given to the Food Authority prior to businesses opening. This is to give the authority an opportunity to inspect the premises and offer advice on compliance before they commence preparing or selling food.

Offering advice is an integral part of the food safety practitioner's work.

In 2009/10 the service will be carrying out initiatives to encourage businesses not currently achieving "broadly compliant" status to improve their food hygiene standards. This will involve a mix of initiatives including personal contact, identifying what type of assistance is needed and seminars aimed at supporting local business to achieve better compliance.

In addition to the advice given during routine inspections, many requests for advice/service at proposed new businesses or businesses proposing significant alterations and requiring a site meeting will normally be received during the year.

### **Working with Business**

South Kesteven District Council is committed to maintaining liaison with food businesses in the District as demonstrated above and in para. 3.8 below.

Specific arrangements are carried out to inform businesses of new legislation as necessary.

Businesses are regularly surveyed with service user surveys and the results of these surveys are collated, reviewed and acted upon as necessary. New businesses, premises or proprietors are identified and contacted by various means such as planning/building control applications, liquor licence applications, surveys, legal searches etc.

Premises scoring less than 30 points and therefore below category "D" (see para 2.6) are initially enforced by alternative means, eg phone contact, seminars, news letter, self assessment etc. Any seminars carried out will normally be on a full cost recovery basis.

Formal contact by businesses, which results in a visit to a commercial premise, is recorded as a premises visit, service requests by business eg phone enquiries are recorded as service requests on the flare data base, but not as visits.

### **3.4 Food Inspection (Imported Foods) and Sampling**

It is the policy of the Council to carry out sufficient examination and sampling of foods and water to satisfy the requirements of Codes of Practice and Statute and to monitor standards in the District.

The FSA have stated that the control of Imported Foods is seen as a key responsibility for local authorities. This follows the Foot and Mouth disease outbreak and other incidents thought to be associated with illegal imported foods. The identification/examination of imported foods and their provenance is now included within the routine food premises inspection process.

Routine food sampling is carried out in combination with drinking water sampling. A "Sampling Policy" for all samples taken is in place, together with a system of work for such sampling. Food sampling is carried out in accordance with an agreed Lincolnshire wide programme. These samples are submitted to Leeds HPA Laboratory. Food sampling may also be carried out following complaints or similar, and specimens are submitted to the Public Analyst for determination. Electronic recording devices are used to monitor and record the performance of temperature control equipment (Ecolog Monitoring).

### **Resources**

The Code of Practice requires food authorities to detail the resources they will allocate to imported foods control.

Samples resulting from complaints are examined within Healthy Communities and where necessary submitted to the Public Analyst (PA). 91 foodstuff complaints were received in 2008/09.

Actual food and water samples for 2008/09 were 178 and 172 respectively.

Time spent in 2008/09 on sampling of foods by practitioners was 193 hours. The time spent on water sampling was 174 hours.

**Note: excludes travelling**

### **3.5 Food Poisoning and Infectious Disease Control**

It is the policy of this Council to respond appropriately to all notifications of food poisoning and infectious diseases.

A protocol to guide the investigation of notifications of food poisoning and infectious disease has been developed in association with the Lincolnshire Food Group and Lincolnshire Health (now Primary Care Trust/HPA) "Infectious Disease Guidance". This document includes agreed response times for investigating various infections. Liaison takes place with: GP's, Hospitals, Health Protection Agency, Primary Care Trusts, Other Local Authorities, DEFRA, The Meat Hygiene Service, Anglian Water Services Ltd., Food Businesses and the Food Standards Agency depending upon the circumstances of each case.

It is difficult to pre-plan the availability of staffing resources for this activity as individual notifications and outbreaks cannot be predicted and are sporadic. When incidents occur, it may be necessary for a whole team to become involved. The investigation must take priority and other work is rescheduled. Serious consequences for public health can result from illnesses that produce notifications. Responses by the section must be made within the agreed maximum time scales set out in the guidance.

Note: A significant outbreak of Paratyphoid occurred within SKDC in 2008/09 following the return of a school trip from Nepal. Working with the HPA the service prevented any further spread within the community of this dangerous and highly infectious organism.

Infectious Diseases do not respect this Council's boundaries, therefore in addition to the common Lincolnshire protocol, close liaison must exist between other local authorities and external agencies. To ensure the co-operation is robust, countywide exercises take place. Inter Agency Audits with the Health Authority have been carried out and recommendations arising from the audit have been implemented.

Emergency cover exists through the Council's "emergency out of hours" service arrangements. See para 2.6 service availability.

#### **Resources**

In 2008/09, 257 notifications of infectious disease were received, of which 206 were regarded as significant and investigated in accordance with the above protocol. Total time spent on all aspects of infectious diseases, including training, averaged at about 10 hours per week made up of 3.75 hours Administrative Support and 6.0 hours officer time (not including travelling). It should be noted that workloads can increase dramatically in the event of an outbreak.

### **3.6 Food Safety Incidents**

Food Alerts are defined in the Code of Practice. This sets out the actions local authorities are expected to take. It is the Council's policy to respond in line with the Code of Practice.

The procedure for dealing with such incidents is set out in service policy documents. This policy incorporates procedures intended to satisfy the requirements of Codes of Practice and other guidance.

Approximately one/two alerts per week are projected.

The level of response necessary for each food incident is extremely variable and therefore very difficult to project.

#### **3.7.1 Liaison Arrangements**

The Council recognises the importance of acting in a consistent manner with adjoining authorities.

Arrangements are in place to ensure that enforcement action taken in this District is consistent with those of neighbouring Local Authorities including:

- Membership of Lincolnshire County CEHO Food Group, which incorporates Environmental Health as well as Trading Standards, Health Protection Agency, HPA Laboratory Service, FSA, and others involved in food. The group has and continues to:
  - encourage development of common protocols;
  - organise consistency training events and exercises;
  - organise and conduct consistency audits (Inter Authority Audits);
  - liaise with other county food groups;
  - organise county benchmarking studies.
- Membership of The Lincolnshire Environmental Health Group (Env Health, Trading Standards, Defra, HPA, and co-optees)
- Consultee for relevant Planning and Building Control applications
- Compliance with LACORS and FSA guidance

#### **3.7.2 Liaison Within the Council**

Regular liaison is held as necessary with other services of the Council, such as Legal Services, Development and Building Control sections and the Licensing team. The database of commercial premises is maintained and updated by using mechanisms such as, Local Authority Searches, The Rating Register, liaison with the Capital and Assets Management Group as well as surveys of the District. A large survey of the district was undertaken in 2008/09 and the data base of premises has been updated.

## **Resources**

An estimate of the resources to service the above liaison arrangements is approximately 50 working days of officer time. (Not including travelling and taking no account of the contracted in survey work carried out in 2008/09).

### **3.8 Food Safety and Standards Promotion**

The Council recognises the importance of Food Safety Promotion and its place in satisfying the required elements of the statutory code of practice, achieving the Council's priorities of Quality Living, Good for Business and Quality Organisation as well as maintaining and enhancing the council's reputation.

Promotional work is carried out by means of the following:

- Provision of information detailing providers of Food Hygiene training.
  - Identifying and communicating with ethnic groupings, and facilitating training both at foundation and at higher level, in accordance with the principles of equality as stated in the Council's Corporate Equalities Scheme, with "equality of outcome" being recognised as essential.
  - Providing Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) training for food businesses on a recharged basis. This is an FSA initiative, which comprises a documented food safety system with deemed legal compliance.
  - Supporting and supplementing national campaigns run by the FSA in particular Food Safety Week.
  - Issuing press releases and giving media interviews in appropriate circumstances.
  - Giving *ad hoc* presentations to schools and similar, community groups, business clubs, Town Centre Partnerships and others.
  - Implementation of a local Food Hygiene Star Award scheme from April 2006, satisfying the requirement for Freedom of Information compliance by providing a web link on the SKDC web site. All relevant food businesses are covered by the scheme, rating them from Nil to Five stars, as they are routinely inspected. Certificates and window stickers are issued to businesses achieving 3 stars (good), 4 stars (very good) and 5 Stars (excellent).
- A "newsletter" is provided for food businesses in SKDC and includes topical articles. This is issued at 6 monthly intervals.

- Food safety, and in particular the Food Hygiene Star Awards scheme, is actively promoted in the Council's Customer Contact Centre.
- A new web area has been developed and contains advice for business and the public in respect of starting a new food business and all aspects of food safety including nutrition.

## **Resources**

Current administrative support and officer time which needs to be assigned to food safety and standards is assessed as 20+ hours per week.

## 4.0 RESOURCES

### 4.1 Financial Allocation

Extracts from the Council's budget indicate as follows:

Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget								
2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2008/09	2009/10	
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
227,300	233,848	252,544	176,696	238,530	243,920	193,777	204,084	195,471		248,143	Food Safety
10,900	13,074	12,462	9,100	12,627	12,600	14,892	8,237	10,745		27,482	Water Quality
32,900	29,016	37,986	24,905	30,302	36,840	20,039	14,485	32,959		20,705	Infectious Diseases
<b>282,200</b>	<b>283,337</b>	<b>307,887</b>	<b>218,487</b>	<b>284,208</b>	<b>296,480</b>	<b>228,708</b>	<b>226,806</b>	<b>239,175</b>		<b>296,330</b>	*

Note: \* The increase in budget for 2009/10 follows revised support cost allocations within the Council and the Healthy Communities Service The total service cost budget for Healthy Communities for 2008/09 was £391,947 and budget for 2009/10 is £415,261.

Food Safety and Water Quality 2007/8 budgets reduced due to reduction in support service recharge.

Budgets for Water Quality and Infectious Disease Control are shown as these link to the main budget for Food Safety. The budget for Health Promotion was removed in 2005. No provision is made for court proceedings, and no contingency budget held, in the event of a significant case being taken central funds would be required.

Staffing costs for 2003/04 were varied by the resignation and non-replacement of several Environmental Health Practitioners during the financial year. Other costs were broadly in line with budget. The budget for 2004/05 was revised following appointment of replacement staff. Actual costs for 2005/06 will have been varied by long term sickness of a staff member and the additional cost of employing a contractor.

## **4.2 Staffing Allocation**

The staff time allocated to the cost centres for Food Law Enforcement (includes Infectious Diseases, Sampling (food and water) Port Health, Health Promotion (80%) and Complaints (66%) are based on the previous financial year as follows (figures for earlier years for comparative purposes in brackets :

**Note:**

- (1) The figures shown for 2000/01 and 2002/03 and 2003/04 in respect of the EHM © refer to the aggregate of 2 previous PEHO posts.
- (2) EHO time for 2003/04 includes overtime
- (3) EHO and food safety officer time has been combined from 2004/05 .
- (4) Time allocated has been derived from Flare using the headings for Food Safety (G70) (G40) (G41) (G42) (G43) Infectious Diseases (G15), and Water Supplies (G32) (G71) all 100% allocation from 2007 and FTE calculations on basis of 225 days @ 7.5 hours per officer.
- (5) Time allocations do **not** include contractor time and are based on time directly recorded to specific functions
- (6) Contractors have been used from 2005

	<u>Full Time Equivalent</u>								
<b>*Healthy Communities Manager</b> – Manages the Healthy Communities Section and is responsible for services such as Health and Safety enforcement, Water Supplies, Infectious Diseases and Corporate Health and Safety, Community Leisure development.	<b>08/09</b> 07/08 06/07 05/06 04/05 03/04 02/03 01/02								
	<b>0.12</b> 0.15 0.21 0.37 0.43 0.67 0.72 0.80								
<b>Commercial Team Leader</b> (New post from May 2008) Is responsible for work allocation and ensuring the risk assessment programme is met.	<b>0.4</b>								
<b>Environmental Health Officer</b> – Contributes to risk inspection programme targets and qualified to deal with all Food Safety and associated activities.									
	1.33 1.38 2.70								
<b>Food and Safety Officer and Sampling Officer</b> – Involved in operation of food sampling programme, investigation of infectious diseases, low and high risk food inspection programme targets, qualified to carry out low and high risk food premises inspections.									
	2.56 2.63 1.80								
Combined <u>totals</u> for EHOs and Food Safety Officers and sampling officer.	<b>2.4</b> 4.25 4.09 4.05 4.25 3.89 4.01 4.50								
<b>Administrative Support Officers</b> – Carrying out all administrative support duties associated with food safety, infectious disease control, water supplies etc.	<b>0.22</b> 0.17 0.14 0.47 0.75 1.09 1.24 1.30								
<b>Total Staff time</b>	<b>3.14</b> 4.57 4.44 4.89 5.43 5.65 5.97 6.6								

#### **4.3 Staff Development Plan**

The Council recognises it is essential that staff enforcing food law are qualified and trained in accordance with the Food Safety Act Code of Practice and it is Council policy to ensure that a suitable development and training plan is in place. This is done via the Investors in People approach and associated performance and development reviews to ensure officers are suitably qualified and maintain competency as required. The Code of Practice specifies a minimum of ten hours per annum ongoing training for officers in food matters.

On going training of all staff is arranged as necessary and this includes:

- Attendance at approved training courses to qualify staff as required by Code of Practice
- Regular in-house briefings during Team Meetings as well as *ad hoc* specific meetings
- Attendance at training events organised jointly with legal services to assist in compliance with required legal procedures
- Attendance at training events co-ordinated by the Lincolnshire CEHO Food Group
- Attendance at appropriate training events organised by the Food Standards Agency, LACORS and other agencies.
- Attendance at training courses to enable the FLARE/Authority software system to be better utilised.

**A service budget of £6,000 is available for Healthy Communities short course training, seminars etc. A significant proportion of this total will be spent on food, water and infectious disease related training. Training already approved/carried out includes:- attendance at East Midlands Regional Conference, Flare/Authority software, HPA training day.**

#### **5.0 Quality Assessment**

The Council is committed to the provision of a quality service with associated reviews of quality measures.

The following measures are in place to assess the quality and levels of performance achieved in food law enforcement.

- Documented procedures including:

- Inspection of Food Premises Guidance
- Foodstuff and Premises Complaint Investigation Guidance
- Investigation of Food Poisoning and Infectious Diseases Guidance
- Food and Other Sampling Guidance
- Procedure for Contractors

The following measures are in place to assess the quality and levels of performance achieved in food law enforcement:

- Auditing of food related work to measure and assess compliance with the above guidance
- Assessment of Service User Surveys and follow up investigations in the event of critical comment by service users will be carried out during the coming year
- Collation and publication of key performance indicators
- Benchmarking against other local authorities in Lincolnshire has been carried out via the Hampshire Matrix quality assessment and the Council was in the top 25 percentile
- Inter Authority Auditing of the Lincolnshire Food Authorities has been carried out and an action plan produced and followed through
- Internal audits by KPMG have previously been carried out and recommendations from this carried out
- Achieving and maintaining the Investors in People Award
- Checking of notices and other legal processes by a line manager
- Any complaints against the service are investigated in accordance with service and Council procedures

Note: The FSA have carried out an audit of the use of contractors at SKDC in 2008/09

## 6.0 REVIEW

### 6.1 Review against the Service Plan for 2008/09

Current resources available are considered sufficient, subject to demands generated by any other unforeseen circumstance, to maintain the levels of performance projected for the coming year in the areas of activity shown below. In the event of demand exceeding capacity, work will be prioritised on a risk assessed basis, with the following priority order.

- Complaints and service requests
- Interventions at high risk premises
- Infectious Diseases
- High concern revisits
- Food Examination /Sampling
- Special Visits including SFBB
- Other Advisory Visits and Promotional work
- Low concern revisits

Closer working and partnerships with businesses groups and individuals who are customers and stakeholders in the service, remain an ongoing aspiration and will continue to be developed.

A review and redrafting of internal policy and procedural documents relating to food work has been completed. The review of all documentation relating to infectious diseases and sampling will be completed within the period.

We will seek to comply with and achieve all relevant performance indicators and maintain continuous improvements.

We will continue to carry out any necessary training and to review policies. The potential impacts of the Hampton Review, the Rogers Review and the creation of LBRO are noted.

#### **6.2 Identification of any variation from the Service Plan**

A review will be carried out at the completion of the year, together with ongoing assessments during the year to identify any variations from the plan.

#### **6.3 Areas of Improvement**

Any areas requiring improvement, identified by the review will be specified in an Improvement Plan.

#### **6.4 Review of Performance for Year 2008/09**

- 97% of food inspections due by hazard for the year were carried out
- A total of 579 food premises inspections were carried out
- All except 3 required revisits were carried out and a total of 463 non inspection visits were carried out
- The sampling programme was maintained and over 350 food, water and pool samples taken
- 11,815 “hits” were made on the food hygiene star awards web site
- Two food newsletters were sent to food businesses
- Our enforcement policy was fully complied with
- The introduction of the Star Awards Scheme has resulted in an improvement in standards of food safety at food businesses. 1,049 businesses are rated and 951 (91%) are rated as 3 star or above.