

FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICE PLAN 2011-2012

1. AIMS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1.1 Corporate Vision and Aims

1.1.1 The Council's vision is defined in its Corporate Strategy:

- *"as a well managed council, we will strive to make South Staffordshire a safe and healthy place to live, with prosperous villages and thriving communities where everyone can develop their abilities to the full and pass on to future generations a better environment"*

1.1.2 Its corporate aims, relevant to food safety enforcement services, are:

- *to be a healthy and safe District in which to live, work, and visit;*
- *to be a well managed Council .*

1.2 Service Aims and Objectives

1.2.1 The Council's Food and Health & Safety Team (Team) contributes towards the corporate aims and vision detailed above through the Directorate's Mission Statement:

- ▶ Focused enforcement - targeting primarily on activities giving rise to the most serious risks to the environment, health and safety or the public.
- ▶ Any enforcement will be fair, accountable, consistent, proportionate and transparent.
- ▶ Reduce burden on business through improved partnership working and more consistent working as a Council.
- ▶ Involvement of the public and businesses in the Directorate's approach and policies.
- ▶ Improved communication.

The overall aim is to ensure that there is fair regulation for all, achieving a safe, clean, and green District for residents, businesses and visitors.

1.3 Policies and Procedures

In adopting its Food Law Enforcement Service Plan, South Staffordshire Council will take into account:

1.3.1 Providing a comprehensive service to food consumers and food businesses in South Staffordshire. We have the main responsibility for enforcing the provisions of the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006, and associated European Community regulations made under the European Communities Act 1972 in all food premises located within the District as well as the Food Safety Act 1990 and its associated Regulations.

1.3.2 The Council's current policy for provision of its food safety service is for those services to be undertaken in accordance with:

- (i) its statutory duties;
- (ii) Food Law Codes of Practice;
- (iii) its current Enforcement Policy; and
- (iv) its current Food Law Enforcement Service Plan, produced in accordance with the Standard and Service Planning Guidance contained in the Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement and approved and developed in consultation with the Portfolio holder.

In addition and without prejudice to the above requirements, Council officers undertaking those Food Safety Services will:

- (i) contribute to priorities identified by the Food Standards Agency and referred to in the Council's current Food Law Enforcement Service Plan;
- (ii) follow procedures documented, by its Environmental Health Manager, in accordance with the Standard contained in the Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement; and
- (ii) have regard to circulars and other guidance, particularly those issued by the Food Standards Agency and the Local Government Regulations Group (LGR).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of South Staffordshire

South Staffordshire is a mainly rural district situated on the north western edge of the West Midlands conurbation. It covers an area of 101,000 acres with a resident population of almost 106,000 scattered in villages throughout its area. Although principal settlements include Penkridge, Brewood, Great Wyrley, Cheslyn Hay, Codsall, Bilbrook, Perton, Wombourne and Kinver, there is no single residential or commercial centre of the District.

South Staffordshire overall is a rural area with many attractions for visitors. This is reflected in the fact that over 80% of the food businesses operating in the District are caterers or retailers.

2.2 Organisational Structure

2.2.1 The Council has adopted the 'cabinet and leader' approach to local governance as the most appropriate model for South Staffordshire.

- 2.2.2 The Environmental Health & Licensing Manager reports to the Director of Legal and Public Health Protection on food safety matters and has delegated powers to determine applications for registration, consents and formal approvals under EC Regulations for approved premises.
- 2.2.3 The Consultant in Communicable Disease Control, employed by the Health Protection Agency West Midlands North Health Protection Unit (HPU), is the Proper Officer appointed by South Staffordshire Council for the purposes of the amended Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 and the Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988 the latter amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2008.
- The health protection powers are contained within the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 (as amended) together with the Health Protection (Local Authority Powers) Regulations 2010 and the Health Protection (Part 2A Orders) Regulations 2010.
- 2.2.4 The Public Analyst appointed by Staffordshire County Council undertakes analysis of food samples and complaints.
- 2.2.5 West Midlands Food, Water and Environmental Services Laboratory at the Microbiology Department at Good Hope Hospital in Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham is utilised for examination of food and faecal specimens and ADAS at Wolverhampton for the examination of milk samples.
- 2.2.6 Appendix 1.1 details how the food safety service fits into the Council's local governance arrangements.
- 2.2.7 The Food Safety Team has in this financial year merged with the Health and Safety Team having taken into account the recommendations of Lord Young's Review on reducing burden on businesses and improving efficiencies.

Appendix 1.2 details how this Team fits into the Council's management/officer structure

2.3 Scope of the Council's Food Safety Service

- 2.3.1 The joint Team is responsible for food law enforcement within the District. In working towards the portfolio aims and objectives detailed in section 1.2 above, the Team undertakes a range of functions. These encompass both statutory enforcement responsibilities imposed by food safety and public health legislation and an educative approach to food safety through health promotion and the provision of advice to local businesses.
- 2.3.2 There are currently 831 food businesses operating within South Staffordshire. These comprise a range of premises including manufacturers, caterers and retailers. All food premises will receive an intervention applied in a risk-based manner by the Council's food safety officers, who advise on good practice and enforce compliance with legal requirements. The inspection frequency of each food premises is programmed according to the risk assessment system prescribed in the Food Law Code of Practice, which takes into account potential hazards, level of compliance and confidence in management control systems. In addition, in the region of 100 inspections of mobile caterers, operating at markets, car boot sales and large-scale outdoor events in South Staffordshire are undertaken each year.

The Team, apart from delivering food safety enforcement is also responsible for a variety of other activities including:

- Provision of low cost food hygiene training for businesses
- Inclusion of initiative based health and safety enforcement
- Public Health Initiatives relating to food businesses, workplaces, residents and visitors to the District.

Food safety services provided by the Legal and Public Health Protection Services are as follows:

2.4 Programme of Planned Interventions

Introduction

- The Food Standards Agency published a revised Food Law Code of Practice in June 2008. This has been produced in line with the Rogers Review and Hampton Report, the work of the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO) and the Regulatory Compliance Code the aim of which is to reduce the burden of regulatory services on businesses. The Code of Practice has an impact on the inspections programme for food businesses. New approaches and interventions will be undertaken as an alternative and to supplement inspections. The inspection programme and delivery of interventions, is in line with the Code.
- Interventions are activities designed to monitor, support and increase food safety compliance within food establishments. Interventions include inspections, monitoring, surveillance, verification, audit and sampling. These are known as Official Controls.

Education, advice, coaching and information and intelligence gathering are other forms of intervention but are *not* classed as Official Controls.

- Food hygiene interventions are part of the system for ensuring that food meets the requirements of food hygiene law, including microbiological quality; absence of pathogenic micro-organisms; and safe for consumption.
- The Food Authority will document, maintain and implement a food hygiene interventions programme that includes all food establishments. The programme will ensure that establishments within South Staffordshire are inspected in accordance with their inspection rating(s) at frequencies laid down in the Food Law Code of Practice Annex 5 The Food Hygiene Scoring System (Revised June 2008).

Planned Inspections / Interventions

- All food establishments will be included in a food hygiene inspection programme that is managed using the Environmental Health Computer System – 'Uniform'. The minimum inspection frequencies as set out in the Food Law Code of Practice will as far as practical be observed. It is recognised that some food establishments and businesses will present a greater risk to the consumer than others. South Staffordshire Council's inspection programme recognises that the frequency of the inspection will vary according to the type of food business, the nature of the food, the degree of handling and the size of the business. Those establishments posing potentially a higher risk will be inspected more frequently than those with a lower risk. Special regard will be given to food businesses that are involved in methods

of preparation including processing, cooking and packaging of food that present particular risks.

- Inspections will be planned so that businesses are inspected, as far as is reasonably practicable, within the relevant period determined by the inspection rating. The Food Law Code of Practice standard states that planned interventions should normally be completed by the due date as determined by the frequency rating, but in any case no more than 28 days after that date. The inspection of higher risk establishments will always take preference over the inspection of lower risk businesses.

Low-risk activities and our alternative enforcement strategy

- Premises with an intervention rating of category E for hygiene may be dealt with by an Alternative Enforcement Strategy (AES). This allows for the removal of very low risk food businesses from the inspection programme. However businesses classified in this way must still receive a food hygiene intervention at least once every three years.
- It is envisaged that such establishments will be contacted at least every three years in order to ensure that they have not changed their trading activity. Initially, this will be achieved by issuing a "low-risk" questionnaire. In the event of a questionnaire not being returned a visit will be made to establish the current situation. During the visit the officer will determine whether a "low-risk" assessment remains appropriate.
- The need for an inspection will also be triggered by criteria other than the planned intervention programme, including:
 - Receipt of consumer complaints;
 - Changes in management and
 - Significant changes in activities.
- Where a low risk business specifically requests an inspection, this will be undertaken to assist the business. For example, either low risk premises or established businesses who wish to obtain greater compliance with food law.

2.5 New businesses and Food Registration

- Food business operators to register their establishment with the appropriate Food Authority unless they are subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004 or fall outside the scope of Regulation 852/2004. A record will be maintained of all registered and approved premises.

Details of those premises registered or approved by South Staffordshire Council will be made available for inspection by the general public at all reasonable times. A web based application will be available on the Council's website this year and will be updated on a quarterly basis. In addition, certain categories of registered premises will be displayed on the Staffordshire-wide 'Rate My Place' website.

- Unrated businesses - New businesses will be flagged for an initial inspection and will then be risk rated. Until that happens the business remains unrated. Information packs will be sent to businesses identified.

- Details of new food businesses as supplied to South Staffordshire Council will be copied to the County Council Food Authority i.e. Trading Standards within 28 days of receipt. Currently this is done at the end of each month.
- Where the service becomes aware that ownership of a food business has changed or a new business has commenced, it aims to undertake an intervention within 28 days of the business starting trading.
- The purpose of the intervention is to establish the scope of the business, gather and record information, determine if food sampling or swabbing is necessary, identify food safety breaches, determine relevant enforcement action to be taken by the food service, communicate this to the business and evaluate risk rating score.

2.6 **Revisits**

Where the operator of a food business is required to undertake improvements to comply with food safety legislation, a revisit may be undertaken after the date specified for compliance.

2.7 **Investigation of complaints**

Food safety officers respond to all reports of complaints about food premises and food purchased within South Staffordshire. All justifiable complaints are thoroughly investigated to determine the appropriate enforcement action and to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to prevent any recurrence. This frequently involves contact with local food businesses, manufacturing companies and local authorities in other areas.

2.8 **Responding to enquiries and requests for advice**

Existing business operators are actively encouraged to contact the Team for advice on food safety issues. Food safety officers are also keen to provide advice on statutory requirements and good practice in response to enquiries from potentially new operators considering setting up new food businesses in the district.

2.9 **Food Alerts**

Food Alerts concerning a food hazard or food incident may arise from within the Food Authority or be reported via the Food Standards Agency. All formal food alerts are issued by the Food Standards Agency in respect of certain foodstuffs and will be received by way of the Environmental Health Communications Net email system.

On receipt of the food alerts, an assessment will be taken with respect to the action required which will either be: 'Food Alerts – For Action' This provides local authorities with details of specific action to be taken on behalf of consumers to ensure appropriate measures are taken to remove stocks of relevant foods from sale by traders in this District.

A 'Product Withdrawal Information Notice or a Product Recall Information Notice' is issued where a solution to the problem has been put in place – the product has been, or is being, withdrawn from sale or recalled from consumers, for example.

The Team, will as appropriate, ensure liaison with the County Council, Trading Standards Department, over the handling of food alerts that have implications for both authorities.

Details of all food alert investigations will be recorded and held on the Environmental Health Computer System.

2.10 Food sampling

Sampling, to monitor food safety standards, is undertaken during inspections, when foods are subject to complaints, part of the process of investigating food poisoning investigations, environment sampling and as part of national and local microbiological food sampling programmes, including participation in the Local Government Regulation (LGR) formally known as LACORS, national sampling programme.

The services of a Public Analyst and a Food Examiner are sought for appropriate analysis and examination of foodstuffs.

In the order of 80 – 100 samples are taken annually for both food and environmental swabbing.

Unsatisfactory sample results are followed up with further sampling and investigation.

2.11 Investigation of food borne illnesses

The Council receives notification of food poisoning cases from general practitioners, the Health Protection Agency and its laboratory services. Actual or suspected food poisoning and food borne infectious disease notifications are assessed and where necessary investigated and action taken to prevent spread of infection.

The investigation will consider the nature of the illness or suspected illness; how many cases are involved; the employment of the person particularly in relation to high risk groups; and the history of food businesses implicated.

Outbreaks as defined by the guidelines produced in agreement with the HPA's Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC) are responded to as a matter of urgency and actioned immediately.

2.12 Food hygiene promotion and education

The Council has a strong commitment to promoting food safety. Articles and advice on food safety issues are produced for the Council's 'South Staffordshire Review', a publication going to all residents of South Staffordshire. A similar publication for businesses is the 'Business Review', which is produced by the Service on behalf of the Council and includes advice for the trade. A new initiative is the Council's new 'e business reviews' emailed to businesses regularly throughout the year on matters relevant to them.

The Team offer a programme of food hygiene training based on the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) criteria for business operators/food handlers and to other organisations, County Council and groups requesting such training. In addition, tailored in-house training programmes and advisory sessions

are catered for interested parties for whom the in-formal programmes are more suitable.

'MyPlace MySay for Business' is a new web based forum introduced by the Council offering local businesses the opportunity to talk to each other and swap advice and support. It attempts to give local businesses extra support during the difficult economic times and to make information about new opportunities and funding more accessible.

Major food safety promotional programmes include:

- Participation in the annual and national Food Safety Week scheme aimed at the general public.
- Talks to local groups and schools.
- Rate My Place, where the majority of the food businesses inspected are assessed and given a Star Rating based on standards of hygiene, structure and documented food safety management systems in place. The scores range from 5 Stars (Excellent) to No Stars (Very Poor) and the scheme promoted on a County wide website and on the Council Website.
- Promotion of 5 Star premises.
- Interventions and advice during major outdoor events.
- The Staffordshire Healthy Eating Awards and Nutrition Training is an ongoing matters in this years work programme.

2.13 Food premises approvals

Certain food operations require prior approval by the local authority. In South Staffordshire these include manufacturing, cold stores and egg packaging plants. Premises and food operations are inspected prior to issuing approvals and systems regularly monitored thereafter, to ensure continued compliance with legal requirements.

2.14 Other Services

The Team has now merged with the existing Health and Safety Team and is now responsible for proactive health and safety inspections; undertake topic based interventions / inspections and hazard spotting to address occupational safety matters arising during the course of food safety inspections. Its officers are also expected to provide initial responses to all types of environmental health enquiries; support the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control, where necessary, in investigations and control of waterborne incidents and infectious diseases; process applications for approvals and comment on planning applications regarding food businesses.

2.15 Demands on the Food Service

- 2.15.1** The food premises profile for South Staffordshire is set out below. Interventions are undertaken on a risk-based approach. Category A premises being the highest risk with an Intervention every 6 months, Category B yearly, Category C every 18 months, Category D every 2 years and Category E's subjected to Alternative Strategies every 3 years, because of the relative low risk associated with these businesses.

2.15.2 The number of Risk rated food premises operating in South Staffordshire as of the end of the financial year 2011 was 757 and falling into the following risk groups:

Risk Category	Total
A	15
B	90
C	243
D	111
E	298
Unrated	74 following review reduced to 49
Total = 831	

- The unrated premises have been reviewed and this figure has been reduced to 49 premises, many of which are new or changed businesses awaiting inspection.
- 3 of the above are high volume manufacturers whose products are distributed nationally and who refer to the Council as their originating authority;
- 3 are approved under product specific legislation;
- 4 are approved egg packing centres;
- 1 is a cold store;
- A significant proportion of the food premises are catering businesses forming a major part of the local economy.
- A major production line has been introduced in early 2011 into an existing manufacturing unit to supply chilled food to a national supermarket chain.

A number of unrated and new businesses awaiting interventions will also arise during the year. Since 2009 a new procedure has been established to identify how many new / changed businesses arise.

The number of premises due for Interventions for 2011 -2012 is as follows:

Cat A	15	
Cat B	90	
Cat C	150	
Cat D	47	
Cat E	59	(All since 2007 = 220)
Unrated	49	
Total =	410	

2.15.3 South Staffordshire hosts a number of outdoor events at country parks including the high profile V Festivals, the annual Game Fair and other temporary events attracting a considerable number of businesses and members of the public to these events. These, together with a varying number of car boot sales in the region of 20 a year and one large market operating regularly in the District, attract many mobile food traders, which receive interventions outside the Council's annual food safety inspection programme.

2.15.4 The service is delivered between 8.45 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday from a single location situated at the Council Offices, Codsall. Inspections and investigations are undertaken outside normal office hours where required and necessary in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice.

2.15.5 Informal arrangements are in place for contacting senior officers regarding matters arising out of normal working hours e.g. food poisoning outbreaks, food safety incidents and Food Incidents and hazard warnings. A Director on call system operates within the authority.

2.15.6 Factors that may have major impact on service delivery include: -

- Continuous need to upgrade 'Uniform', the environmental health database to new versions, maintaining the database and provide suitable training for its effective use;
- Responding to large scale food poisoning outbreaks and food hazard warnings;
- Large-scale one-off events occurring in addition to the normal commercial activities of the area, such as the 'V Festivals';
- Responding to ongoing changes in food safety priorities such as the Welsh E.coli 0157 outbreak and the Pennington Report;
- The intervention inspection scheme introduced by the Food Law Code of Practice;
- Two Officer days a week allocated to Licensing Enforcement;
- Undertaking of health & safety intervention work with food safety interventions as suggested by the Young report in 2010.

Where such factors arise there could be an adverse impact on the routine food safety inspection programme. Contingencies would be in place for exploring arrangements with other local authorities in working in partnership, upskilling members of staff in other disciplines to increase capacity and improve resilience.

2.16 National and Local Priorities

- 95% of the high risk food businesses (Category A & B) would be required to be inspected within 28 days of the date programmed for inspection.
- 250 is a target of the number of businesses approaching the Portfolio for advice and attending advisory events.
- 80% of Not Broadly compliant businesses to receive focussed advice or formal action.
- 75% of Not Broadly compliant businesses to progress to Broadly compliant within 6 months of the initial inspection.
- Although NI 184 for Food establishments in the area which are 'Broadly Compliant' with food hygiene law' was removed in March 2010, this plays a

significant part in the Departments local priority as a way of determining the impact of the Services inspection programme

2.17 Enforcement Policy

2.17.1 South Staffordshire Council is in the process of reviewing and redeveloping its enforcement policies and producing a corporate enforcement policy by December 2011. This will be in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Enforcement Concordat.

2.17.2 Documented food safety enforcement and monitoring procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with the Enforcement Policy.

3 SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Main Issues to consider for 2011-2012 (Linked to Appendix 1.3 Work Plan)

3.1.1 The main issues of the Council's Food Safety Team will be:

- Completing programmes of interventions of higher risk food premises and approved premises, particularly Category A, B and C premises (Some D's and E's will be included based on their scope and activity);
- Alternate between Official Controls and other interventions in one sector / type of identified Category D premises – resources permitting.
Alternate Enforcement Strategies for Category E premises - resources permitting.
- It is anticipated that existing 4 and 5 Star rated premises in the 'Staffordshire Rate my Place scheme' will not receive a full inspection, but will be subject to a 'partial inspection or audit' as deemed appropriate by the officer on the information available and circumstances present, unless the circumstances dictate otherwise, at which point the officer will revert to a full inspection.
- Catering in schools under the responsibility of the County Council will receive an audit type intervention and officers directed to use the shorter proforma form developed. This is as a result of the County Council having developed substantial food safety management systems endorsed by the County wide District and Borough Councils food safety teams.
- Prioritising the intervention programme for higher risk premises and premises routinely not achieving 'Broadly Complaint' levels;
- More in depth enforcement work for Zero and One Star rated premises to ensure 'Broadly Compliance' status by the end of the enforcement work and at least within 6 months of the initial inspection;
- Increasing the number of food premises achieving higher Star Ratings within the Rate My Place, Star Rating Scheme;

- Delayed inspection of due Fish and Chip shops to incorporate the Staffordshire wide salt and fat reduction project currently undertaken by Stoke City Council.
- Investigating suspected outbreaks of food poisoning; respond to complaints regarding food and food premises; participate in the consultation for planning applications
- Undertaking a more structured sampling programme in line with the Staffordshire / Shropshire Food Sampling Group proposals;
- Identifying the number of businesses approaching the Service for advice and attending advisory events particularly for food safety, in line with Service Plan indicators.
- Increasing the advice and guidance offered to existing and new food businesses to take into account indicators in the Service Plan.
- Review and improve the information provided on the Council's website, for both businesses and consumers.
- Undertaking partnership working where required with other regulatory bodies such as Trading Standards, such as including joint inspections for food standards;
- Promoting and enhancing the Service;
- Provision of the CIEH Level II Award in Food Safety in Catering for food businesses;
- Endeavour to promote the CIEH Level II Award in Healthier Food and Special Diets for food businesses, with a view to allow food businesses in the District to apply for the Staffordshire wide Healthy Eating Awards;
- Participating in the National Food Safety Week, which this year will again focus on reducing the most common form of infectious disease - campylobacter infections.
- Continue to respond to the Pennington Report following the E. coli 0157 outbreak in South Wales.
- Review of Food Procedures and Guidance Notes for officers.
- Undertake health & safety inspections and hazard spotting in specific premises during food inspection visits as defined in the Health and Safety Work Plan.
- Engagement of businesses.
- Undertaking the monitoring returns to the Food Standard Agency via LEAMS;

3.2 Continuous Promotion of Safer Food better Business

3.2.1 EC Regulations, which first came in on 1st January 2006, require business operators to implement effective, documented, food safety management systems. Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) is a management system, developed by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), for catering businesses. Operators who do not

utilise SFBB have to develop their own systems or engage consultants to do this for them.

3.2.2 A documented and implemented Food Safety Management System is an important criterion in the Staffordshire wide Rate My Place, Star Rating Scheme. Failure to have in place a suitable system can lead to a poor star rating score. The Team will continue to support and promote SFBB to food businesses in the District, particularly where businesses are not Broadly Compliant.

3.3 Intervention Programme for Food Premises

3.3.1 Interventions as described in paragraph 2.4 will be undertaken with reference to the Food Law Code of Practice, in accordance with Council policy and documented procedures. These are reviewed annually and revised as and when legislation/guidance changes.

3.3.2 Following an Intervention, officers will assess the risk posed by the food business with reference to:

- the nature of its operation;
- the scope of the business;
- level of compliance with food safety requirements;
- confidence in its management.

This assessment will be used to determine the date of the next planned intervention / inspection.

3.3.3 The number of inspections highlighted for 2011 -2012 are detailed in paragraph 2.15.2.

3.3.4 In addition to visits undertaken as part of the intervention programme, inspections will also be undertaken in respect of: -

- New business operations or change of ownership;
- new approvals of food businesses;
- complaints regarding food business operations;
- enquiries and requests for advice from food businesses;
- investigation of poor sampling results;
- transient food stalls and mobiles;

3.3.6 Revisits will be undertaken where significant breaches of hygiene regulations are identified during an inspection. Based on the percentage of inspections previously generating revisits, it is estimated that in the region of 100 will be required in 2011-2012.

3.3.7 The Team will undertake the intervention of all Categories A, B and C rated premises; some Category D rated premises based on scope and activity; one sector to be targeted for intervention and one Alternative Enforcement Strategies for a sector of Category E rated premises during 2011-2012. The Food Safety Services main priorities are detailed in paragraph 3.1.1 above and Appendix 1.3. The Council's annual performance targets are to undertake:

- 95% of all Category A and B risk food businesses within 28 working days of the due date;
- at least 90% of C risk inspections within 28 working days of their due dates;

- 3.3.8 Inspections will be undertaken by officers employed as Environmental Health Officers or officers in receipt of the Higher Certificate in Food Premises Inspections, who all have considerable experience in food safety enforcement.
- 3.3.9 To accommodate inspection of high risk food businesses and specialised and complex manufacturing processes, officers in the Team are qualified and appropriately trained, including an officer trained to MSc level in food safety, hygiene and management, specialist food safety officers; with all officers having access to the following technical support:
- Local Government Regulation (LGR) website, publications and seminars;
 - Food Standards Agency website, publications and seminars;
 - Internet Access.
- 3.3.10 Resources required for food premises interventions for 2010-2011 are detailed in paragraph 4.1.1 of this document.

3.4 Complaints about Food and Food Businesses

- 3.4.1 Complaints about food and food businesses will be undertaken in accordance with documented Council procedures. These are reviewed annually and revised as and when legislation/guidance changes.
- 3.4.2 Targets for investigating complaints about food and food businesses are included in the Council's annual performance target for:
- Respond to 95% of all enquiries within 3 working days.
 - Resolve 85% of request for service within 40 working days
- 3.4.3 Based on previous numbers of complaints received, it is estimated that in the order of 150 complaints about food and food businesses will be investigated in 2011-2012.
- 3.4.4 Resources required for investigating complaints about food and food businesses in 2011/12 are detailed in paragraph 4.1.1 of this document.

3.5 Home Authority Principle

- 3.5.1 In accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice, the Team will have regard to the LGR Home Authority Principle in that it will:
- provide advice to businesses on food safety policies and procedures, where this Council acts as home and/or originating authority;
 - respond to enquiries from other local authorities regarding businesses for which this council acts as home and/or originating authority;
 - liaise with the home and/or originating authority of a business, where offences are identified and appear to be associated with its centrally defined policies or procedures.
 - have regard to the Local Better Regulation Office's (LBRO) Primary Authority Scheme, for businesses who have entered into a statutory partnership with a local authority.

- 3.5.2 The Council has no formal agreements currently in place to act as a home authority for any food business.
- 3.5.3 It does, however, act as originating authority for a number of local manufacturers and processors supplying food for the national and international market. It is estimated that in the order of 10 complaints and referrals, regarding these businesses, will be investigated during 2011-2012
- 3.5.4 Resources required for satisfying home authority principles in 2011/12 are detailed in paragraph 4.1.1 of this document.

3.6 Advice to Businesses

- 3.6.1 Council procedures for responding to and dealing with complaints, enquiries and other requests for service are documented. These are reviewed annually and revised as and when legislation/guidance changes.
- 3.6.2 Planning and building regulation applications relating to food businesses will be examined and, where appropriate, applicants contacted to seek further information and/or to provide advice.
- 3.6.3 The Council’s annual performance targets for responding to requests for advice are the same as those relating to complaint investigations and are detailed in paragraph 3.4.2 above.
- 3.6.4 Based on previous numbers of enquiries and requests for service received, it is estimated that, in the region of 200 can be expected during 2011-2012.
- 3.6.5 During 2011 -2012 articles on food safety issues and any legislative changes for businesses will be included in The Council’s ‘Business Review’ publication and ‘e business review’. Alternatively, information /advice leaflets for businesses have been produced including a new leaflet on Food Safety Management Systems and the Rate my Place Star Rating scheme.
- 3.6.6 Resources required for providing advice to food businesses in 2011-2012 are detailed in paragraph 4.1.1 of this document.

3.7 Food Sampling and Hygiene Monitoring

- 3.7.1 Routine food sampling will be undertaken in accordance with the Council’s documented Food Sampling Procedure, which incorporates annual programmes for:
 - sampling from local businesses;
 - co-ordinated sampling developed with the Staffordshire Food Safety Group;
 - nationally co-ordinated sampling developed by LGR and the wider Regional laboratory group.

For the first half of 2011 – 2012 the agreed sampling programme with the Shropshire and Staffordshire Sampling Group comprises of:

Sample Type	Month
Campylobacter in raw poultry - LGR	April to Sept 2011

Lightly cooked foods: Evaluation of cooking and food preparation in practice LGR	April – Sept 2011
Rice: Cross Regional study on Bacillus sp.	April –March 2012
Ducks Eggs: LGR study on Salmonella	July – Sept 2011
Hog Roasts: Cross Regional study following outbreaks associated with Salmonella sp.	Aug – Sept 2011
LGR - Outdoor Events	August 2011

3.7.2 Other food sampling and hygiene monitoring will be undertaken:

- as part of food poisoning and complaint investigations;
- as part of food premises inspections to monitor hygiene standards and confirm adequacy of food processing systems;
- as an intervention in the food inspection programme.

3.7.3 Examination and analysis of food samples and environmental hygiene swabs will be undertaken at accredited laboratories detailed in paragraphs 2.2.4 and 2.2.5.

3.7.4 Most of the food sampling carried out by the Unit will be undertaken for monitoring and surveillance purposes, on an informal basis, by a Food Safety Officer trained for such purposes. Where formal food sampling is required, it will be undertaken by officers qualified in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice.

3.7.5 Based on sampling undertaken in previous years, it is estimated that in the region of 80-100 food samples and/or hygiene swabs will be submitted for examination or analysis in 2011-2012.

3.7.6 Resources required food sampling in 2011-2012 are detailed in paragraph 4.1.1 of this document.

3.8 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

3.8.1 Investigations of incidents and outbreaks of food poisoning disease will be undertaken in accordance with Council procedures, which are documented with reference to:

- the Health Protection Agency West Midlands North (Shropshire and Staffordshire Major Outbreak Plan, which was introduced by the Shropshire and Staffordshire Health Protection Unit in March 2004 and updated in June 2010,)
- Guidelines for the Investigation of Food Poisoning and similar Gastro-intestinal Illness, have been revised in consultation with the Staffordshire/Telford & Wrekin/Shropshire Food Safety Group and Consultants in Communicable Disease for North and South Staffordshire and updated in June 2010.

These documented procedures are kept under review and revised as and when legislation or guidance changes.

3.8.2 The Council's annual performance target, for responding to food poisoning notifications is that:

- at least 95% of all food poisoning notifications will receive a response within 3 working days;

In addition the Council's Food Safety Team will endeavour to ensure that all notifications of food poisoning outbreaks receive an immediate response.

3.8.3 Based on the number of notifications of food poisoning received in previous years, it is estimated that in the region of 150-200 notifications will be received in 2011-2012.

3.8.4 It is not possible to estimate, with any accuracy, the number of outbreaks that will require investigation in 2011-2012 but data from previous years suggests that the figure is likely to be in the region of 5-10.

3.8.5 Resources required for food poisoning investigations in 2011-2012 are detailed in paragraph 4.1.1 of this document.

3.9 Food Alerts / Food Safety Incidents

3.9.1 Council procedures for responding to and initiating food safety incidents are documented in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice. These are reviewed annually and revised as and when legislation/guidance changes.

3.9.2 It is not possible to estimate, with any accuracy, the number of food safety incidents that will be received in 2011-2012 but, based on data from recent years, it is likely to be in the region of 100.

3.9.3 Resources required for responding to and initiating food safety incidents are detailed in paragraph 4.1.1 of this document.

3.10 Liaison with other Organisations

3.10.1 South Staffordshire Council will be represented at regular meetings of the Staffordshire/Telford & Wrekin/Shropshire Food Safety Group by its Senior Environmental Health Officer (Food Safety). The group includes representatives from all nine of the Staffordshire Authorities, County Council Trading Standards Department and the Health Protection Agency. To encourage consistency of enforcement within Staffordshire, the Group:

- formulates and reviews strategies and procedures for adoption by individual authorities;
- liaises with other professional bodies over general matters of enforcement;
- liaises with the food trade and trade organisations (e.g. Soft Drinks Federation, Staffordshire County Education and Social Services Departments) over specific matters arising;
- liaises with advisory groups (e.g. LGR and the Meat Hygiene Service) over specific enforcement issues;
- arranges and undertakes consistency exercises;
- undertakes peer review exercises;

3.10.2 The Council's Senior Environmental Health Officer (Food and Health & Safety) or representative will attend meetings of the Staffordshire / Shropshire Food Sampling Sub Group. The group is organised by the laboratory and includes representatives from food authorities within the Staffordshire and Shropshire region. Its remit is to raise and discuss food safety and infectious disease issues of current concern and in particular:

- to provide information about local food poisoning outbreaks and investigations;
- to look at issues arising from food surveys and the examination of food samples.

3.10.3 A Health Protection Agency Liaison Group comprising of a partnership between the HPA, Primary Care Trusts, Water Companies, Laboratory Services and Environmental Health Departments is represented by a member of the Staffordshire Food Group. The Group have a wide remit including:

- develop guidelines on infection control issues;
- act as advisory groups, making recommendations on all aspects of communicable disease (including food poisoning);
- formulate exercises and, where necessary, implement outbreak control plans.

3.10.4 Resources required to maintain liaison with other organisations in 2011-2012 are detailed in paragraph 4.1.1 of this document.

3.11 Food Safety Promotions and Education

3.11.1 The Council's Food Safety Team will continue to provide advice and promote food safety, directly, during inspections, investigations, food sampling and in response to enquiries, food alerts and food poisoning notifications.

3.11.2 During 2011-2012 the Council's Food Safety Team also aims to undertake the following programme of promotions:

- Providing the CIEH Level II Award in Food Safety in Catering for food businesses and for local food handlers;
- Providing a South Staffordshire based training programme specifically tailored for local groups as required;
- Supporting national Food Safety Week. This year highlighting Campylobacter food poisoning and preventative measures.
- Participating in the introduction of the Staffordshire-wide healthy eating award schemes;
- Resource permitting to giving talks, on request, to local schools and other groups as permitted by resources.

3.11.3 Resources required for food safety promotions and educations in 2011-2012 are detailed in paragraph 4.1.1 of this document.

3.12 Primary Authority Principle

3.12.1 The Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR) has introduced the principle of Primary Authorities. Where agreements have been reached between business and local authorities to act as primary authorities, officers will before taking any formal action, consult with the Primary Authority in accordance with agreed procedures laid down by BERR. In addition, the Team

will be investigating and identifying businesses and companies within the District who may be in a position to pursue a Primary Authority agreement with the local authority.

3.13 Street Trading Consents

3.13.1 A Street Trading Policy is being considered with the intention of applying Street Trading Consents to the whole of South Staffordshire District area and every street within it to be designated as a consent street. A full consultation process will be undertaken in the process.

4 Resources

4.1 Staffing Allocation

4.1.1 The resources required to undertake the services described in Sections 3 and 4.2 of this document (excluding senior management and clerical support) are detailed in the table below: -

Function	2011-2012 resources based on previous years workloads (Full time equivalent posts)
Food Premises Inspections	2.00
Complaints about Food and Food Businesses	0.25
Home Authority Principle	0.05
Advice to Businesses	0.15
Food Sampling and Hygiene Monitoring	0.25
Control and Investigation of Food Poisoning	0.30
Food Alerts	0.05
Liaison with other Organisations	0.05
Food Safety Promotions and Education (including	0.75
Supervision and Administration	0.95
Staff Development	0.20
Total Resources Required	5.00

4.1.2 The resources currently available for undertaking food law enforcement are 5.0 full time equivalent (FTE) officers as detailed below:

- Senior Environmental Health Officer (Food Safety element) - 0.40 FTE
- Environmental Health Officer (Food Safety element) - 1.00 FTE
- 2 Food Safety Officers - 1.00 FTE
- Technical Food Safety Officer - 0.3 FTE

- In October 2011 due to increase by - 0.2 FTE

4.1.3 The Food Safety Officers are qualified to the level of Higher Certificate in Food Premises inspection. The qualifications and competency of Environmental Health Officers and the Food Safety Officers enable them to undertake inspection of all categories of food business. The Technical Food Safety Officer and additional officers, currently undergoing training, will undertake inspection of lower risk food businesses and some Category C rated premises.

4.1.5 Clerical support is provided by:

- Senior Clerk - 0.20 FTE
- Clerical Assistant - 0.20 FTE

4.1.6 The Environmental Health Officer with lead responsibility for food hygiene and safety matters for South Staffordshire Council is:

- The Environmental Health Manager - 0.2 FTE

4.2 Staff Training and Development

4.2.1 Officers authorised to undertake inspections must be suitably qualified and demonstrate their competency to undertake inspections and audits of food safety systems. The Food Law Code of Practice also requires authorised food officers to receive at least 10 hours, structured on-going training, annually.

4.2.2 Documented food safety officer training procedures require the development of on-going training programmes based on requirements and personal development objectives identified through:

- the Council's Employee Development and Appraisal Scheme;
- food safety team meetings;
- monitoring details of officers inspections, investigations and subsequent enforcement.

4.2.3 To fulfil training needs, officers will attend seminars and courses arranged by the Staffordshire Food Safety Liaison Group, Central Government advisory bodies, other local authorities and external training organisations.

4.2.4 Officer Training Procedures now require officers attending training courses and seminars to record details of the effectiveness of that training and to feed back relevant information at Food Safety Team meetings.

4.3 Financial Allocation

4.3.1 Sufficient financial allocation for delivery is available as per budget pages approved and scrutinised by the Portfolio Holder.

5 Quality Assessment

- 5.1 Documented monitoring procedures are to be reviewed to monitor the quality and consistency of its food safety services and ensure that they are undertaken in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice, Central Government Agency Guidance and its own documented policies and procedures.
- 5.2 The quality of service provided by the Unit will be assessed by:
- monitoring performance against targets detailed in South Staffordshire Councils Service Plan for food premises inspections and responses to requests for service;
 - monitoring actual working practice against procedures for:
 - inspections of food businesses;
 - investigation of complaints and food poisoning notifications;
 - enforcement;
 - undertaking customer satisfaction surveys in respect of inspections and investigations.
- 5.3 Performance monitoring will be undertaken by generating reports from the Uniform database on:
- inspections undertaken, for comparison against annual programme;
 - complaints and other requests for service, to monitor progress
- 5.4 Working practices will be monitored, routinely, through close and immediate contact between the Team and Senior Environmental Health Officer / Environmental Health Manager and, specifically, by:
- the Senior Environmental Health Officer closely monitoring all formal enforcement action and all investigations of Food Alerts and Food Poisoning outbreaks;
 - the Senior Environmental Health Officer scrutinising:
 - all reports on food poisoning outbreaks, food complaints, food condemnations and food alert warnings;
 - 25% of reports on the investigation of other complaints;
 - all reports on approved premises inspections;
 - 10% of reports on all other inspections/interventions and re-visits;
 - all proposals for formal enforcement action;
 - all incoming correspondence and contentious outgoing correspondence;
 - the Senior Environmental Health Officer undertaking at least two monitoring visits with each food safety officer and any contractor;
 - the Senior Environmental Health Officer undertaking at least two inspections of A/B risk premises, previously inspected by each of the food safety officers and contractors;
 - all programmed inspections of B risk premises, previously inspected by contractors, being undertaken by in-house food safety officers.
- 5.5 Complaints regarding services provided will be investigated under the Council's formal complaint procedure.

6 Review

6.1 Review against the Service Plan

6.1.1 The process of review will be commenced in April each year by the Environmental Health Manager having regard to:

- performance over the previous 12 months;
- resources available over the previous 12 months;
- the Framework Agreement on Authority Food Law Enforcement, guidance from the Food Standards Agency and advice from LGR;
- results of external audits and peer reviews;
- examples of best practice observed elsewhere;
- responses to customer satisfaction surveys and consultation with local businesses and the community;
- observations from councillors and the Team.
- Systems Thinking reviews

6.2 Identification of Variation from the Service Plan

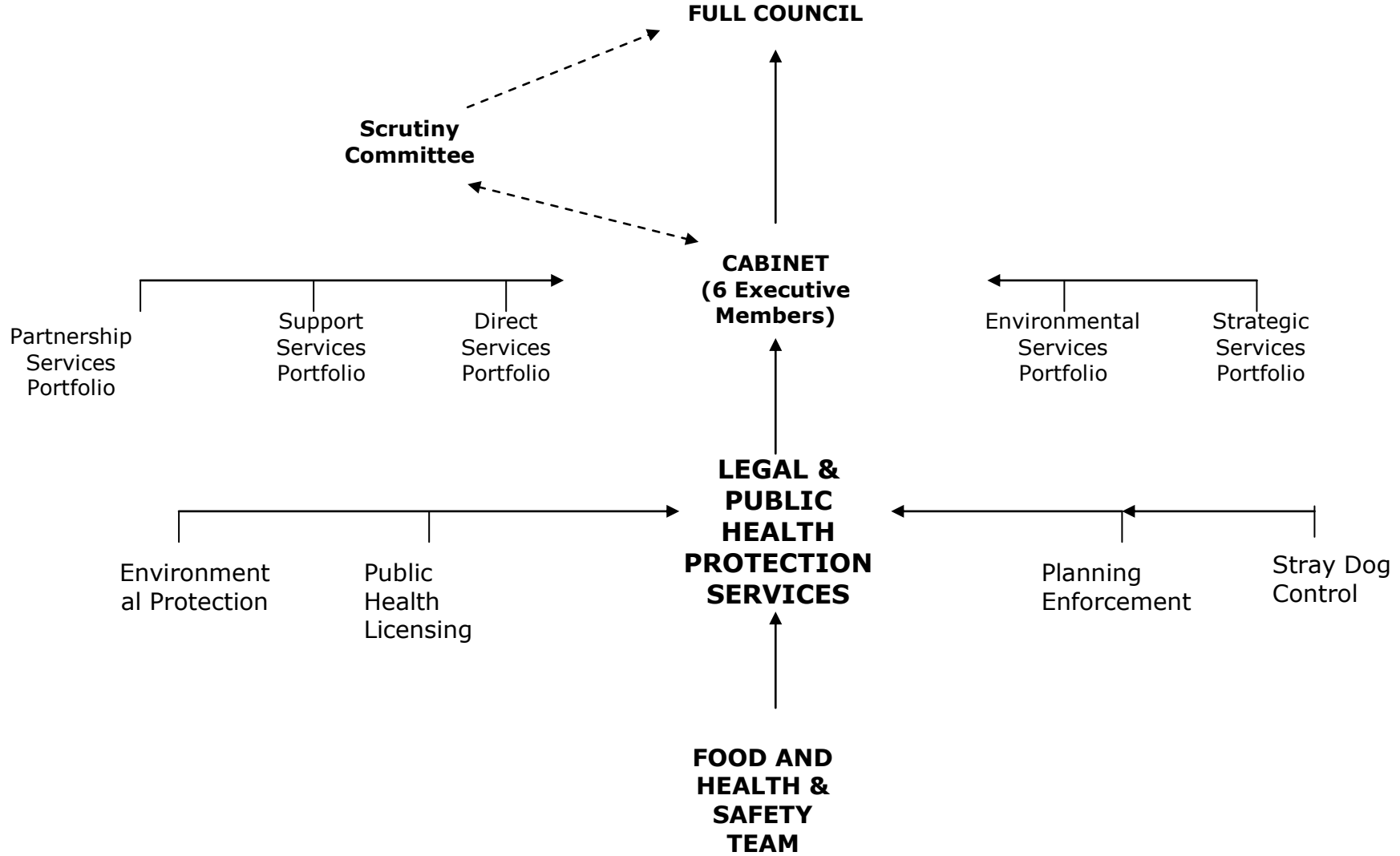
6.2.1 Quarterly reports on performance against targets will be made to the Portfolio Holder (Legal and Public Health Protection Services), when any variances against this Service Plan, including resource implication, will be addressed.

6.2.2 Details of variation from the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan will be included in the report referred to in paragraph 6.1.1 above.

6.3 Areas of Improvement

6.3.1 These will be identified in the review of performance against last year's service plan, which will be reported to members in May 2012.

Appendix 1.1
FOOD SAFETY SERVICE AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE
STRUCTURE

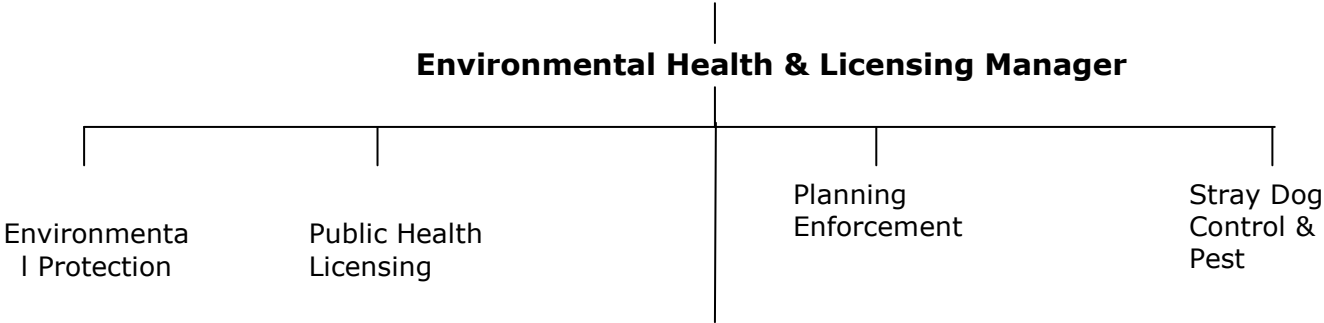


**Appendix 1.2
FOOD SAFETY SERVICES AND MANAGEMENT / OFFICER
STRUCTURE**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE & STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT TEAM (SMT)

The Director of Legal and Public Health Protection is part
of SMT

LEGAL & PUBLIC HEALTH PROTECTION SERVICES



FOOD AND HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM

**Senior EHO (Food and Health & Safety)
(0.4 FTE)**



Appendix 1.3

Work Plan for the Food safety Team, 2011-2012 Linked to Section 3.1 Main issues for 2011-2012

1	Ensuring compliance with statutory provisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completing programme of interventions by inspection of higher risk food premises and approved premises, particularly Category A, B and C premises. ▪ Remaining Cat D ▪ Carrying out alternative enforcement interventions of lower risk food businesses (Cat E premises). ▪ 4 or 5 Star Rated premises 	<p>To achieve 100% intervention of Cat A & B premises.</p> <p>Not-Broadly Compliant Cat C premises - to receive full inspection.</p> <p>Broadly Compliant Cat C - to receive audit intervention.</p> <p>Some Cat D & E premises identified each quarter - to receive Partial Inspected or Audit intervention based on scope and activity.</p> <p>To target one sector or category of business using audit type intervention.</p> <p>To target one sector.</p> <p>Subjected to partial inspection or audit as deemed appropriate by the Officer. Revert to full inspection if conditions / information of concern.</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ County Catering School Catering 	Audit type intervention and use of shorter inspection forms produced for schools.
2	<p>Prioritise the intervention programme for premises continually identified as Poor or Rated Zero or One Star in the Council's Rate my Place scheme; or requiring specific interventions.</p> <p>A grant allocation has been set aside for this project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify methods of ensuring premises improve standards and Star rating and achieve minimum of 'Broadly Compliant'. - more intensive one to one work with the business - Determine reasons for poor rating in order to target poor areas of compliance - Increased enforcement potential - Increase use of Statutory Notices 	To achieve improvements in premises to at least 'Broadly Compliant' status – 3 Stars within 6 months of initial inspection
3	Increase the number of food premises achieving higher Star Ratings within the Rate my Place scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the Rate my Scheme and businesses who have achieved 5 Stars in the year 2010 -2011 	<p>Publish information in the various Council publications and website.</p> <p>Merit businesses achieving 5 Stars and publicise.</p>
4	Raise awareness of the requirements of legislation and promote good practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New food businesses registering with the service are provided with a detailed information pack to assist with compliance with food safety legislation. ▪ Identify the number of businesses approaching the service for advice and attending advisory events with regards food safety and health & safety. <p>Review and update the information provided on the Council's website for both businesses and consumers.</p>	<p>New businesses sent / provided with a pack.</p> <p>250 over the year.</p> <p>Identify 5 main areas to target.</p>

5	Interventions at New Businesses /Change of Ownership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the service becomes aware that ownership of a food business has changed or a new business has commenced, an intervention will be undertaken within 28 days of the business starting trading. 	Priority of businesses deemed to be of higher risk to have an intervention first.
6	County-wide Salt and Fat reduction Project	<p>To incorporate the project into fish & chip shops already due for inspection in this financial year to encourage reduced salt usage and prepare food in healthier / alternative fats.</p> <p>Aim is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> encourage salt reduction in food products and provide reduced hole salt shakers to businesses. encourage use of non hydrogenated fats / alternatives. Sample and analyse some samples before and after study as comparison. 	<p>Two LAs to apply for funding to enable salt shakers to be purchased and for sampling to be undertaken. Leaflet material possibly also to be incorporated into this funding.</p> <p>Promote this to businesses during due inspections. Establish number of businesses interested in participating and provide shakers.</p> <p>Undertake initial sampling.</p> <p>Revisit after 6 months to assess / evaluate progress and undertake post study selected sampling.</p> <p>Pilot currently undertaken by Stoke</p>
7	Respond promptly and effectively to service requests, infectious disease notifications and new business registration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To achieve the set response time for service requests, infectious disease notifications and new businesses. 	<p>Respond to 95% of all enquiries within 3 working days.</p> <p>Resolve 85% of enquiries within 40 working days.</p>

8	To monitor the safety of food sold in the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement a food sampling programme in line with the Staffordshire and Shropshire Food Sampling Group and internal programme of sampling to establish the microbiological safety of food sold in the District. 	Work to the 6 monthly sampling programme and undertake sampling during routine inspections as deemed necessary.
9	Provision of training courses for businesses and other sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme of courses established for the provision of <i>Level 2 Award in Food Safety Catering in Food Businesses</i>. ▪ Programme of training for the <i>Level 2 Award in Healthier Food and Special Diets</i> will be provided if interest present from businesses to enable food businesses in the District to apply for the higher award in the Staffordshire wide <i>Healthy Options Award</i> . 	<p>Courses every 3 months, and additional ones for County Catering</p> <p>Course will be provided if sufficient interest present from local businesses.</p>
10	Healthy Eating Award.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target 2 businesses this year to achieve either a Gold, Silver or Bronze Healthy Eating Award. 	Promote the award to businesses during routine inspection visits to achieve 2 awards.
11	To take part in the National Food Safety Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To participate in National Food Safety Week. The campaign theme this year is to prevent <i>Campylobacter</i> infections and precautions required in the home. ▪ Sampling of poultry products to 	<p>Information and advice to businesses and consumers as part of the national campaign.</p> <p>Press releases.</p>

		determine Campylobacter levels.	
12	Continue to Review the Food Procedures and Guidance Notes for Officers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress and finalise all food safety Procedures. 	Complete all Food Safety Procedures.
13	To maintain contact and work in partnership with other statutory bodies within the food safety field.	Membership of the joint Shropshire and Staffordshire Food Group and Sampling Group Liaison with the HPA	Participate in meetings and joint working.