

CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL

Report to:- **Carlisle City Council**

Date of Meeting:- 15 July 2008

Agenda Item No:-

Public

Title:- **FOOD SERVICE PLAN**

Report of:- **Director of Community Services**

Report reference:- **CS 49/08**

Summary:-

The Executive considered and supported the Food Service Plan for 2008/9, at its meeting on 30 June 2008. Report CS 38/08 is appended.

Recommendation:-

It is RECOMMENDED that the City Council approves the Food Service Plan for 2008/9.

Contact Officer: Ruth Harland

Ext: 7334

M Battersby

Director of Community Services

03 July 2008

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: CS 38/08



REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: Environment & Infrastructure

Date of Meeting: 30 June 2008

Public

Key Decision: Yes

Recorded in Forward Plan: Yes

Inside/Outside Policy Framework

Title: Food Service Plan
Report of: Director of Community Services
Report CS 38/08
reference:

Summary:

The Food Standards Agency requires each Local Authority to produce an annual Food Service Plan in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Agency's Framework agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement (Sept 2000). The draft Food Service Plan was considered by Executive on 29 May and referred to Community O/S Committee.

It is RECOMMENDED that the Executive approves the Food Service Plan for 2008/9.

Contact Officer: Ruth Harland, Food Health & Safety Team Manager **Ext:** 7334

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

As required by the Food Standards Agency's framework document, the attached plan contains the following elements:

- The aims and objectives of the food service and the contribution it makes to the Council's corporate objectives
- The scope of the service, the demands placed upon it and the service enforcement policy
- The plan for delivering the service including food premises inspection, food sampling, support and advice for businesses, control of infectious disease and requests for service
- The resources allocated, quality assessment and a performance review of the previous years plan.

Every local authority food law enforcement service is, at some stage, subject to a comprehensive audit by the Food Standards Agency, which since its introduction in April 2000 has had a key role in overseeing local authority food enforcement services. The Service Plan provides the basis on which the Council's food service will be monitored and audited by the Agency. The common format in which service plans are required to be produced enables the Food Standards Agency to assess and compare local authority activities.

2. CONSULTATION

2.1 Consultation to Date. The report was referred to Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee 5th June 2008 but was not discussed.

The FSA does not require that any external consultation takes place

2.2 Consultation Proposed. It is proposed to present a monitoring report to Community O/S Committee in early 2009 to review performance and assist in shaping the plan for 2009/10.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Executive approves the Food Service Plan for 2008/9.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Food Service Plan for 2008-9 has been produced in accordance with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency. It sets out how the Council will deliver its food service during the year, provides information on the previous year's performance against targets and identifies the targets for 2008-9.

The Agency requires that the relevant Member forum must approve the Food Service Plan and at least once per year, a documented performance review must be carried out and submitted for Member approval.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- **Staffing/ Financial Resources** – It is intended that all matters referred to in the attached Service Plan will be met within existing resources.
- **Legal** – Under Section 6 of the Food Safety Act 1990, the Council has a statutory duty to provide a food law enforcement service. The Food Standards Agency takes a very pro-active role in setting and monitoring standards and auditing local authorities enforcement activities in order to ensure this activity is effective and undertaken on a consistent basis. Powers to enable the Agency to set standards of performance, monitor and audit local authorities are contained in the Food Standards Act 1999.
- **Corporate** – - A new National Performance indicator (NI 184 %age of Businesses 'broadly compliant' with food safety legislation) was introduced on 1st April 2008 – all LA's will be required to report on this annually & the FSA strategic plan requires that 75% of all businesses will reach this level by 2010

The Rogers Review has identified that 'hygiene of businesses selling, distributing and manufacturing food and the safety and fitness of food in the premises' was a major enforcement priority for all LA's. There were several reasons for this decision:-

- almost 1 death per day can be attributed to food business operations
- illness arising from food borne diseases cost the economy £900 million in 2005
- Citizens believe it is a priority to ensure safety of food

This Service Plan indicates how the Food Safety Team will deliver these targets and the Authority's statutory duties. It also contributes to the Corporate Priority of a 'Clean, Green and Safe' Carlisle.

- Risk Management – Incorporated within the Councils Risk Register
- Equality Issues – N/A
- Environmental – N/A
- Crime and Disorder – N/A
- Impact on Customers – Failure to deliver an effective Food safety service may impact on the overall performance assessment of the Authority & result in deteriorating food hygiene standards across Carlisle, which may impact on the reputation of the Council

Carlisle City Council

Community Services Directorate

Food Health and Safety Team

**Food Safety Plan
2008-9**

1. Introduction

Carlisle City Councils Food Service Plan is produced in accordance with the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) Framework Agreement on Food Law Enforcement, issued in September 2000. This Framework set out the required structure and content of food service plans. The Plan details the measures that Carlisle City Council (CCC) will implement to ensure the safety of food and drink that is produced, prepared or sold within the district.

The plan is an integral part of the Council's corporate service delivery programme. It will be reviewed annually and presented to the Council's Executive for discussion and approval. When approved, the plan will be published on the Council's website. The Food Standards Agency requires CCC to produce an annual Food Service Plan in this format to be submitted to the relevant Member forum for approval to ensure local transparency and accountability.

The Food, Health and Safety Team in the Council's Community Services Directorate delivers CCC's statutory Food Service.

The Team has been without a full establishment of competent Food Safety Officers since January 2008, but despite this performance has continued at the high level of 2006-7

2. Service Aims and Objectives

2.1 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

The Teams objectives link to the City Councils priority of -'Cleaner, Greener and Safer'

The Rogers Review has identified 'hygiene of businesses selling, distributing and manufacturing food and the safety and fitness of food in the premises' as a major enforcement priority for LA's nationally

A new National Performance Indicator (NI 184: Food establishments that are broadly compliant with food hygiene law) has been established & the Authority will be required to report on this on an annual basis.

2.2 Aims

In delivering the service, the Food Safety Team aims to:

- Protect & promote public health
- Promote consumer confidence
- Enhance food safety
- Deliver services in a competent, professional and courteous manner
- Provide a high quality service at an acceptable cost and to measurable standards
- Provide an impartial and consistent approach to the interpretation and implementation of food safety legislation and the provision of advice.

2.3 Objectives

The key objective of the food safety service is to ensure the safety of foodstuffs, which are manufactured, processed, stored or sold within the City, and to ensure compliance with the relevant Code of Practice, Industry Guides and good working practice for Food Safety matters.

The Team will achieve this by:

- Inspecting 100% food premises at intervals in accordance with the current statutory code of practice. (this is a 'stretch' target from that originally planned) In future years the Team will need to be mindful of the FSA's new Code of Practice (due for publication in spring 2008) which will allow LA's some freedom from carrying out full inspections of food businesses that are seen to have a history of compliance with relevant legislation

The Team will need to work towards the FSA's strategic objective of 75% food businesses being 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene law by 2010.

- In conjunction with Cumbria's Food Liaison Group to continue to implement an alternative enforcement strategy for lower risk food businesses
- To continue to promote Safer Food Better Business as an approved documented Food Safety Management System in relevant businesses and to encourage businesses to attend training seminars if they become available
- Continuing to subscribe and promote the Scores on the Doors system of rating food business in accordance with their compliance with legislation (the FSA is currently considering the introduction of a national scheme)
- Issuing approvals as required and monitoring compliance with relevant legislation
- Providing advice to businesses and the public on food safety matters
- Responding to requests for service and complaints about food and food premises (the Team aims to respond to any request for service within 5 working days)
- Responding to cases of confirmed food borne infectious disease and where appropriate, advising upon appropriate precautionary and control measures (the Team aims to contact all notified cases within 2 working days)
- Sampling and arranging for the microbiological testing of a range of foods produced and / or sold in the district (the Team aims to contact businesses as soon as possible to advise of results and in all cases to advise in writing within 10 working days)
- Continually developing and improving the service to meet the needs of customers, statutory requirements and to achieve best practice
- Ensuring all staff involved in food safety are properly qualified and competent and have adequate equipment and other resources to enable them to undertake their work.

3. Background

3.1 Profile of Food Businesses within the Authority

Carlisle has traditionally been known for its food processing industries and agriculture.

The district has a variety of large food manufacturing businesses and many smaller specialty food producers, including on farm dairies, cheese manufacture and meat product producers.

3.2 Organisational Structure

The food service is delivered by the Food, Health and Safety Team located within the Community Services Directorate, as set out in Appendix 1 attached.

The Team Manager is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the Team and has specialist lead responsibility for the food hygiene function.

Matters relating to the Council's food policies and any other significant matters requiring a decision are referred to the Council's relevant Portfolio Holder, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and /or Executive.

3.3 Scope of the Food Service

The food safety service provided by CCC does not include food standards or feedingstuffs, as the Trading Standards Department of Cumbria County Council currently delivers these services.

The Council's Food Health and Safety Team is responsible for undertaking the following activities associated with the food safety service:

- Food hygiene inspections at fixed premises e.g. pubs, hotels, retail outlets and food manufacturers
- Food hygiene inspections at mobile premises and stalls, including those located at markets and shows
- The investigation of complaints relating to foodstuffs and food premises.
- The investigation of confirmed food poisoning cases and outbreaks, including viral outbreaks.
- The provision of information, guidance and advice to local food businesses and the public
- Registering food businesses
- Undertaking an annual programme of food sampling
- The approval of food premises covered by product specific food legislation e.g. dairies and meat products manufacturers
- The issuing of export certificates to assure importers of production conditions in Carlisle

- Responding to requests from other local authorities in relation to complaints about food purchased in their area but manufactured in Carlisle District
- Responding to complaints of alleged noise nuisance from food businesses
- Responding to Food Standards Agency food hazard warnings
- Consultation responses on relevant planning and building control applications.

In addition the Team is statutorily required to respond to the Council's Licensing Section in relation to premise license applications where specified entertainment is taking place, to ensure the licensing objectives are met.

The Team is also responsible for some non food services and these may, where appropriate, be delivered alongside the food service.

- Health and safety enforcement in approximately 2500 businesses where the Authority is the relevant enforcement agency
- The investigation of notifiable accidents, dangerous occurrences and fatalities in these workplaces
- The investigation of complaints about such workplaces
- Since 1st July 2007 the Team has been responsible for enforcing the Smokefree legislation in all situations/businesses

3.4 Demands on the Food Service

There were 1170 food businesses on the Council's food database at 1 April 2008. These are split between the following categories (as specified by the Food Standards Agency):

13	Producers
31	Manufacturers/processors
0	Packer
0	Importers/exporters
29	Distributors (including wholesalers and transporters)
216	Retailers
887	Restaurant and other caterers
0	Material and article manufacturers
11	Manufacturers selling mainly by retail

Within these food businesses are a number which are approved under product specific food legislation, or licensed as follows:

Product Specific Approvals

Businesses which manufacture and supply certain types of food to markets other than the final consumer are subject to regulation and inspection through European Directives and are currently subject to more rigorous & sometime more frequent inspection than 'non approved' businesses.

The current workload for this type of business is as follows

Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 Specific Rules for Food of Animal Origin

Fish Products No of Premises - 2

Dairy Products No. of Premises - 6

Meat Products No. of Premises - 4

In addition to the above premises, the Team is required to meet additional demands arising from local activities which impact on the food service. This includes farmers markets, which occur in several locations, usually once a month, Continental markets which visit the City several times a year. Other activities include Pop to the Park, Cumberland Show, Brampton Live and other smaller shows and festivals held each year.

3.5 Access to the Service

The Food Safety Team is located at the Civic Centre, Carlisle. Service users may contact officers on site or by leaving a message in the following ways:

- In person: at Civic Centre Customer Contact Centre between 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday; 9am to 4pm Friday. This is a developing part of the service which it is anticipated will grow over the coming years.
- By telephone: 01228 817336 between 8.45am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, 8.45am to 4.15pm Friday
- When officers are out of the office, a message will be taken and calls will be returned as soon as possible. We aim, this year, to respond to 100% of service requests within 5 days
- By e-mail: foodandsafety@carlisle.gov.uk
- By Fax: 01228 817200
- The Council operates an out of hours service for Emergency issues: 01228 817200

3.6 Enforcement Policy

S21 of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 came into force in April this year. Its Regulators Compliance Code requires regulators to 'adopt a positive and proactive approach towards ensuring compliance' and to carry out regulatory functions based on risk assessment

The Council has signed up to the Enforcement Concordat and in so doing has agreed to abide by the principles of good enforcement. The Enforcement Concordat is a government produced standard designed to promote best practice in enforcement

The Council has a documented Food Safety Enforcement Policy (updated February 2008) which sets out the Team's policy and approach to decisions concerning enforcement action relating to food safety, including prosecution. The policy incorporates the principles of the

Enforcement Concordat & of the Regulators Compliance code. The Enforcement Policy is published on the Council's website and is available in hard copy on request.

It is recognised that the majority of individuals, businesses and other groups want to comply with the law. The aim therefore, is to deliver an enforcement service in a supportive way, helping food business proprietors meet their legal duty without unnecessary expense. However, formal action will be taken where appropriate.

4. Service Delivery

4.1 Food Premises Inspections

It is the duty of the Council to register, inspect and approve relevant premises within the district in accordance with appropriate legislation, centrally issued guidance, The Code of Practice and relevant Industry Guides to Good Hygiene Practice.

The Council maintains a database of food businesses in the district, including mobile food vehicles based in Carlisle. This is continually updated, to take into account any changes to existing businesses, any new businesses which have set up, or any which have ceased to trade.

The frequency of inspection is currently in accordance with The Code of Practice, and is based on the nature and size of the business and the degree of compliance with food safety legislation at the time of inspection.

This provides for a minimum inspection frequency of:

Category A	businesses presenting the greatest food safety risk - at least every 6 months
Category B	at least every year
Category C	at least every 18 months
Category D	at least every 2 years
Category E	businesses presenting a minimal food safety risk - can be subject to alternative enforcement strategy

The scheme of priority classification of food premises within categories A to E, is based on the inspection rating scheme set out in the Code of Practice.

The 1132 food premises on the Council's register are categorised as follows:

Category A	10 premises
Category B	54 premises
Category C	453 premises
Category D	184 premises
Category E	416 premises

17 N/A - with no risk assessment due to business not being fully inspected since opening

36 outside the programme due to criteria set by the FSA

In the financial year 2008-9, programmed inspections are due to be carried out, as follows:

- 20 Category A (there are 9 businesses which need to be inspected x2 per year)
- 54 Category B
- 309 Category C
- 84 Category D
- 190 Category E & F these will be subject to an alternative enforcement strategy

These figures may alter to a small extent during the year because of premises being moved from one category to another, premises closing and new premises opening.

Businesses with an inspection frequency of less than once every 2 years can be dealt with by alternative means of enforcement. All Cumbrian authorities have agreed to use such an alternative enforcement strategy in the future. This will involve sending self-assessment questionnaires to relevant lower risk businesses. A sample will then be inspected, as will any that do not return the questionnaire. In 2007-8 a total of 62 businesses were dealt with in this way and audit visits were carried out to 12. It is planned that 190 self assessment packs will be sent out in 2008-9

Revisits following food premises inspections are carried out where appropriate, in accordance with the Enforcement Policy.

Priority is given to high-risk food premises and any national or local situations that require urgent attention and/or as directed by the Food Standards Agency, e.g. checks on the safety of imported meat, responses to food hazard warnings and food poisoning outbreaks etc.

In 2007-8, officers carried out a total of 500 programmed inspections (99.6% of those which were due)

4.2 Food Complaints

During 2007-8 the Food Health and Safety Team received a total of 496 service requests. Of these, 30 were complaints about food failing to meet the food safety requirement e.g. containing foreign bodies or being unfit to eat, a further 54 were complaints about food premises. The remainder of food service requests related mainly to legislation and other food safety enquiries and licensing matters.

In addition the Team also dealt with 85 requests for advice about the smokefree legislation and 67 complaints alleging breaches. Members will be aware that 'one off' funding was received from the Dept of Health to facilitate the introduction of this legislation. 2 additional members of staff were employed on temporary contracts. Both these have now found permanent employment elsewhere and this workload will be absorbed within existing resources.

It is anticipated that a similar level of service requests will be received in the coming year and these will be dealt with in accordance with the Team's documented procedures on requests for service and dealing with food complaints.

The Team aim to respond to 90% service requests within 5 working days and to respond to urgent requests within 2 working days (excluding anonymous requests and certain internal requests e.g. planning and licensing, where alternative arrangements have been agreed).

4.3 Advice to Businesses

CCC recognises the importance of its educational and advisory role as a means of improving food safety and meeting the service demands of stakeholders. The Council welcomes requests for information or advice from businesses and is keen to develop contacts with local business organisations. The Team provides advice to businesses in a number of different ways including:

- Advisory visits where appropriate
- Visits and advice prior to the setting up of a food business
- The provision of advice on best practice during inspections
- The provision of a range of free advisory leaflets and other guidance, including information on the Council's website
- The provision of advice relating to planning or building control applications
- A presence at local food events e.g. food festivals, where businesses can speak with an EHO and obtain information and advice.

In 2007-8 49 requests for advice were received. It is anticipated that this number will continue at this level as the commercial and entertainment sectors in Carlisle are encouraged to grow.

4.4 Food Sampling

The enforcement of food hygiene legislation within Carlisle City Council includes an element of food sampling to assist in the protection of public health and the food law enforcement functions of the authority. Food samples are procured and handled in accordance with the Council's procedure document on food sampling.

The sampling of food for microbiological examination is an integral part of the Council's food law enforcement programme and provides a means of surveillance to ensure food safety and hygiene standards are being maintained in accordance with food hygiene laws.

It is the policy of the Team to participate in the following food sampling activities with an emphasis on the sampling of locally produced high-risk products:

- Investigation of food contamination and food poisoning incidents.
- Complaints (where sampling is considered necessary).
- Participation in the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) / Health Protection Agency (HPA) coordinated sampling programmes.
- Participation in North West Regional HPA laboratories sampling initiatives.
- Co-ordinated programmed surveillance in conjunction with the Cumbria Food Liaison Group.
- Participation in EU co-ordinated control programmes.
- Special investigations e.g. as directed by the Food Standards Agency.
- Sampling related to local events / initiatives
- Environmental sampling (swabbing) in connection with poor hygiene/sample results
- Imported food sampling – approximately 50% of food offered for sale in the UK is imported. The FSA requires all local authorities to take steps to ensure imported food has been

legally introduced and that it is safe for the consumer. Where appropriate, imported food will be included in the sampling programme.

The annual sampling plan formulated each year supports the sampling policy. The proposed programme for 2008-9 is attached as Appendix 2.

The Council's food examiner is currently:

Carlisle Microbiology Services
Cumberland Infirmary
CARLISLE
Cumbria
CA2 7HY

For foodstuffs requiring analysis such as chemical taint, foreign body analysis etc, the Council's food analyst is:

Lancashire County Council
County Analyst
Pedders Way
Riversway
Docklands
Ashton-on-Ribble
PRESTON

The food sampling policy and procedure are reviewed on a regular basis and as required in the event of changes to advice on good practice, legislation and local circumstance.

It is estimated that up to three samples per year may be submitted to the County Analyst in relation to food complaints.

Sampling is normally undertaken by the part-time EHO but all officers are authorized to take samples if required.

During 2007-8, 141 samples were collected for microbiological examination.
134 were classified as satisfactory/acceptable & 7 were classified as unsatisfactory

Samples were taken from a variety of premises during 2007-8 in accordance with the Councils sampling policy and procedure, having regard to the planned programme for that period, and included participation in regional and national sampling initiatives. Such initiatives provide valuable microbiological data, and for this period included the sampling of raw shell egg mix from take-away premises, cream cakes from retail premises, & and environmental samples from businesses handling raw and cooked chicken

The Carlisle Microbiology Services Laboratory issue reports as to the microbiological quality of the food having regard to national guidelines.

The results are graded as follows: -

Satisfactory - a term applied to foods of good microbiological quality (numbers of bacteria are relatively low or not detected in the food).

Acceptable - a term applied to foods reflecting a borderline limit of microbiological quality.

(A review of food handling procedures is sometimes necessary.)

Unsatisfactory - a term applied to foods with a relatively high number of bacteria (indicates that further samples may be necessary and investigation as to whether hygiene practices are adequate or not.)

Unacceptable/ (potentially hazardous) - test results indicate immediate action is required to locate source of the problem. Such results may form the basis for prosecution, especially if they occur in more than one sample.

In the event of acceptable/unsatisfactory sample results being received revisits may be carried out by the Team to investigate any possible source of contamination and give appropriate advice. Re-sampling is carried out together with the environmental swabbing of food preparation surfaces and equipment, as appropriate.

No pathogenic (disease causing) organisms were detected in any of the samples submitted.

The HPA has recently carried out a review of its laboratory provision across the country and the number of laboratories will be reduced as from April 2009. It is highly likely that the food laboratory at Carlisle will no longer be available and samples will need to be submitted to Preston. The effects of this on the Teams ability to continue to meet its current level of sampling are as yet unknown as transport arrangements have yet to be clarified.

4.5 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

The Team's objectives in respect of the control of food related infectious diseases are to:

- Contain the spread of any outbreak
- Identify the focus of infection
- Identify the causative organism
- Trace carriers and cases
- Trace the source of the infection
- Determine the causal factors
- Recommend practices to prevent recurrence of disease
- Determine whether criminal offences have been committed

All cases of food related infectious disease notifications formally notified by The Cumbria and Lancashire Health Protection Unit and where appropriate, those of an informal nature will be investigated in accordance with the Council's documented procedure. Notifications are followed up either by visit, telephone call or postal questionnaire, depending on the organism concerned and the circumstances relating to the incident.

Outbreaks will be responded to in accordance with the Council's procedure, the local Outbreak Control Plan and in liaison with the Consultant in Public Health Protection, who

will lead any Outbreak Control Team set up to deal with the outbreak. There were no food related outbreaks during 2007-8.

Last year 210 hours were spent investigating 166 notifications of food related infectious disease. (a 24% increase on 2006-7) These consisted of:

136 cases of Campylobacter, 26 cases of Salmonella, 1 case of Listeria and 3 of E.coli 0157

A similar level of resource is estimated this year, although this may increase significantly in the event of a food poisoning outbreak

4.6 Food Safety Incidents

The Food Safety Team responds to food hazards warnings and food safety incidents received from the Food Standards Agency, in accordance with the Food Safety Act 1990 Code of Practice and the Council's documented procedure.

The Council maintains a computer system capable of receiving food hazard warnings via EHC-Net and utilises this system on a daily basis, to obtain details of food hazard warnings issued. Food hazard warning messages are also received by via e mail and / or text message.

The response of the Council to notifications of food hazard warnings and food safety incidents will be in accordance with the instructions from the Food Standards Agency given on the food hazard warning or food safety incident issued. 61 food hazard warnings were received during 2007-8, a slight decrease on the previous year

Arrangements have been made within the Cumbria Food Liaison Group to ensure that liaison takes place with the County Councils Trading Standards Officer's as to who should take the lead in cases where it is not immediately clear from the nature of a food hazard warning, whether this should be Environmental Services or Trading Standards.

The Council does not currently operate a formal out of hours response service for food hazard warnings or food safety incidents, however the Food Standards Agency does have out of hours contact details for the Food Safety Team Manager). In addition, the Council's out of hours Emergency Response Team also holds these contact details.

4.7 Liaison with Other Organisations

The Council is represented on the Cumbria Food Liaison Group and the Cumbria Chief Environmental Health Officer Group. These groups provide a forum for Cumbrian authorities to discuss and review food enforcement issues and facilitate a consistent approach to enforcement throughout the county. Furthermore, both groups have links with the Lancashire Groups, enabling a broader basis from which to develop and achieve consistency.

The Food Health and Safety Team is represented on a wide range of working groups and committees, as set out below:

- Cumbria Food Liaison Group
- Cumbria & Lancashire District Control of Infection Committee

- The Health Protection Agency Laboratory/Environmental Health Officers Liaison Group
- Cumbria Zoonosis Liaison Group and the State Veterinary Service
- Commission for Social Care Inspectorate / EHO Liaison Meetings
- The Environmental Health Teams are represented on the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Lake District Branch Committee.
- Smoke Free North Cumbria

The Team has a close working relationship with officers in the Council's Development Control Unit and is notified of all relevant planning and building control applications. Similarly the Team is consulted by the Licensing Section on a range of license applications, and this will now include all variations to existing premises licenses and any new premises license applications.

4.8 Home Authority Principle

CCC acts as the originating authority for a wide range of local food manufacturers and Home Authority principles are implemented without the existence of a formal partnership with the business. The Council provides advice to these businesses on legal compliance and liaises with and investigates complaints on behalf of other Local Authority Environmental Health Departments, who make enquiries relating to these businesses.

Likewise, CCC initiates liaison with other Local Authorities in respect of complaints received. The Council will also consult the home/originating authority before requiring actions/works which may have policy implications for the company, or when legal action is being considered. Having initiated liaison with any home and/or originating authority, the Council will notify that authority of the outcome. Reference will be made to LACORS Guidance on the Home Authority Principle.

4.9 Food Safety Promotion

Members will recall that in 2006-7 the Team was awarded significant grant funding from the FSA to facilitate training of food businesses in relevant aspects of food legislation. Another grant application was made to the FSA for 2007-8, with a specific focus on those businesses run by members of ethnic communities. This bid was not successful and training for all food businesses is now dependant on sufficient resources being found elsewhere.

The Team will continue to promote food safety through local publicity campaigns, via the production of information for businesses and the public, including topical advisory leaflets e.g. barbecue safety, festive food hygiene etc and through involvement with the FSA food safety campaigns where possible.

Evaluation of promotional work will be via press coverage achieved and comments from participants where appropriate.

Scores on the Doors

Members will be aware that all 6 Cumbrian Food Safety Teams are working in partnership & are publishing food hygiene information about retail and catering businesses electronically, via local authority web-sites.

The information is in the form of a 'star rating' system – 0-5 stars, with 5 indicating 'excellent'.

The rating is based on how well the business complies with food legislation requirements for structural & hygiene matters and the confidence that the EHO has in the management systems. This assessment is made following each routine inspection.

Businesses achieving 3,4 or 5 stars a certificate which they may choose to display on their premises

There are currently almost 700 Carlisle food businesses on the system. Since the scheme was introduced in June 2007 over 65000 people have visited our site to access the information about Carlisle.

The scheme benefits the public in allowing them to make informed choices about where they choose to eat

Benefits have also been seen from increased compliance with legislation as businesses wish to achieve a high star rating & have taken advantage of the free training offered previously. This is evidenced by the fact that numbers of Cat B risk rated premises has decreased from 113 in 2006-7 to 54 this year.

Such a system is in use voluntarily in approximately 100 LA's nationwide & the FSA is currently considering the introduction of a national scheme.

5. Resources

5.1 Financial Allocation

The Council has a formally agreed budget sheet.

The estimated overall level of directly controlled expenditure in providing the Food Service (including Health & Safety enforcement) for 2008-9 is £375,000 approximately

5.2 Staffing Allocation

The Food Health and Safety Team of the Community Services Directorate has a staffing establishment of a Team Manager, an Assistant Team Manager, 4 full time District Environmental Health Officers, one Part time District Environmental Health Officer (equivalent to 0.40% of a full time officer) & 2 District Health and Safety officers. 3 Technical Clerks work solely within the Team to provide the equivalent of 1.60 full time administrative support posts.

All specialist food Environmental Health Officers are required to have obtained the Certificate of Registration of the Environmental Health Officers Registration Board (EHORB). In determining the level of competency of officers regard is had to the Code of Practice and the Council's Authorisation and Training Procedure.

Currently one newly appointed officer has yet to complete his professional exams to facilitate this registration but it is anticipated that he will do so within this financial year. Until he achieves this his range of responsibilities and authorisations are restricted – which may affect the performance of the Team

However, it is the intention that all aspects of the service set out in Section 4 above will be met within existing resources.

5.3 *Operational Risks*

The following risks to service delivery have been identified and considered as possibly affecting the ability of the Team to deliver this workload resulting in shortfalls in targets (they included in the Councils Risk Register): -

- A major food poisoning outbreak would mean that all Team members (and possibly officers from other parts of the Directorate) would be taken away from their 'normal' duties
- A turnover of staff within the Team
- A period of long term sickness within the Team

Resource issues will be considered appropriately at the time and may be mitigated by: -

- A re-prioritisation of workloads (as has had to occur in the past)
- Provision of temporary staff from within the Directorate(although there may be an issue of competence)
- Use of temporary staff from outside the City Council (budgetary considerations permitting)
- Increasing the establishment of staff within the Team

5.4 *Staff Development Plan*

Members of the Team have performance appraisal interviews on an annual basis. Key tasks and targets are agreed, which contribute to the objectives of the Team, the Section and the Council. Any essential training needs identified will be provided either in-house or externally. A training budget is allocated to the Team and managed by the Head of Environmental Services.

The Council is committed to ensure that each officer authorised to carry out inspections and enforcement receives structured, ongoing training to promote competency, and raise awareness and understanding of legislation and technological advances. As a minimum, all authorised officers **must** receive at least 10 hours training per year, specifically on food issues, as required by Code of Practice and based on the CIEH requirement for a minimum of 20 hours per year overall continuing professional development training.

Where staff are required to quickly develop an in depth understanding of new legislation or in relation to an area of work they may previously have been unfamiliar with, training needs to be provided as a priority

5.5 *IT Resource*

The Food Standards Agency requires the Authority to set up and maintain a database of all food businesses in the area.

This database is used to provide information on work due to be done and the statistical returns required both internally and by the Food Standards Agency.

This facility is currently an electronic system, which has been developed 'in house' with the assistance of an IT consultant contracted to the Authority. Due to changes in the way information is required to be reported to the FSA, which came into force on 1st April 2008, the existing database is no longer be 'fit for purpose'

A new 'off the shelf' database has been purchased which will allow more accurate recording and reporting of data in the future.

6. Quality Assessment and Monitoring Arrangements

The Council has identified a number of local indicators, which reflect the work and priorities of the Council. Achievements against these indicators, along with the statutory national Best Value indicators, are published each year in the Council's Performance Plan. All indicators within this plan have targets set for a three-year period. The indicators relating to the food service are:

LP 114a - The percentage of food premises inspections carried out of those due for high risk premises (categories A, B and C)

LP 114b - The percentage of food premises inspections carried out of those due for other premises (categories D and below)

Performance against these targets for 2007-8 was as follows: -

% Cat A-C inspected	% Cat D etc inspected
99.7	99.2

(Targets for both categories were 95%)

Quarterly reports of these indicators are presented to the Council's Scrutiny Committees to enable Members to review performance against all indicators throughout the year. The Team Leader of the service is required to explain the reasons for any shortfall and how this may be rectified.

In addition to the above, the Manager of the Team monitors and reviews performance against the above mentioned targets on a quarterly basis and provides feedback to the Team at the team meetings. Performance is also reported to Senior & Departmental Management Teams so that issues can be dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner

From April 2008 a new National Performance indicator has been introduced (NI184 Food establishments that are broadly compliant with food hygiene law) The Authority will be required to report on this annually. In its strategic plan the FSA has set a target of 75% of businesses being 'broadly compliant' by 2010. Carlisle's current performance is 67% & a target of 70% has been set for 2008-9, this will rise to 75% in 2009-10 Resources will therefore be targeted at those businesses that do not currently meet this criteria in order to bring about improvements

The Team Manager also monitors other aspects of the service relating to the quality and quantity of work undertaken by the Team, in accordance with the Team's internal monitoring procedure. This includes monitoring letters and computer entries to ensure consistency and compliance with the service plan and standard. Additionally, each year, the Manager or Assistant Manager will accompany each Officer on at least one inspection visit,

to monitor consistency of approach and compliance with the Teams inspection procedure document, service plan and standard.

In order to measure the 'quality' of the food service, customer satisfaction questionnaires have been sent to premises where routine inspections have been undertaken. Results from 2007-8 show that over 75% of respondents considered officers to be courteous, helpful and easy to deal with & that the overall quality of our service was very good.

A new National Indicator (NI 182 "Satisfaction of businesses with local regulatory services") has been introduced for all LA's from April 2008 and the Team will be required to contribute to this along with teams in other Directorates that carry out regulatory functions. This indicator will contribute to the Authorities overall performance assessment

The Team holds regular meetings (usually 6 weekly) to review performance, discuss new legislation and publications, identify problems, discuss Food Liaison Group issues, Food Standards Agency and LACORS initiatives and correspondence etc, to ensure all members of the team are fully aware and conversant with current issues.

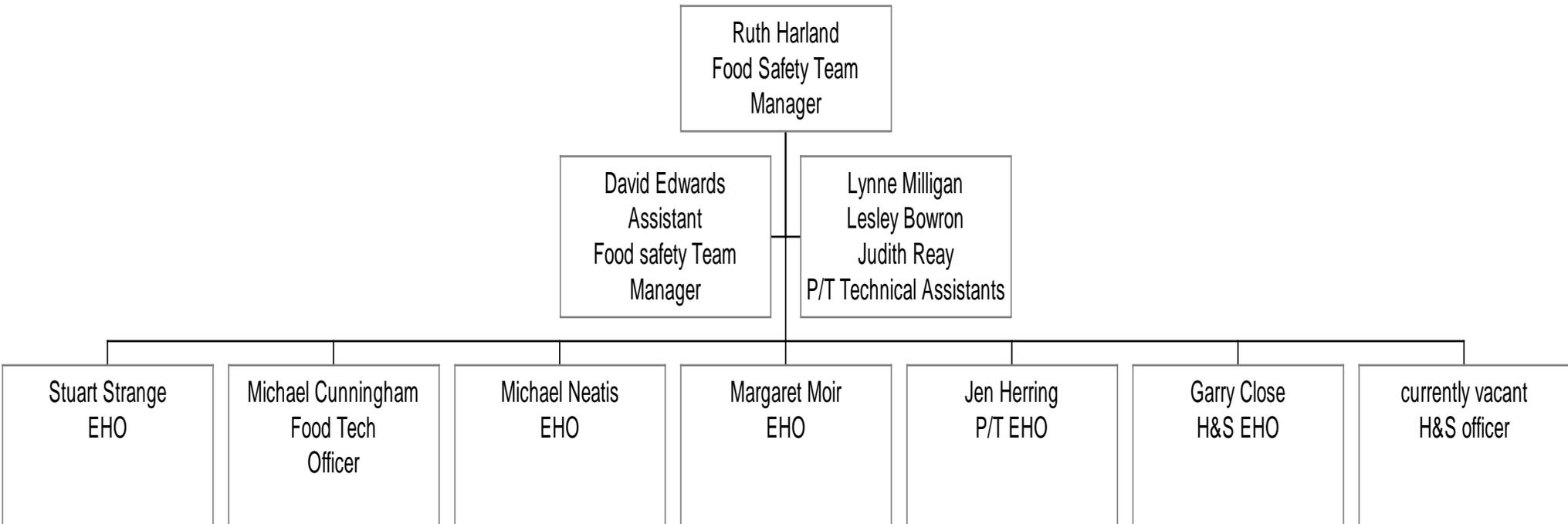
The role of the Cumbria Food Liaison Group in the interpretation of food safety issues and promotion of inter authority consistency is recognised and the Council will be participating in the inter authority auditing of various food service elements which the group intends to undertake during the year.

7. Review

In addition to the above monitoring, and at the request of Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee a review of performance against the previous years plan and specified performance targets has been prepared and is included in this report at Appendix 3. Any missed targets are identified together with reasons for that where appropriate. Additional meaningful performance targets will be developed where necessary.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

FOOD, HEALTH & SAFETY



Product	Frequency
LACORS/HPA Sampling programme speciality meats from markets and delicatessens	April 2008-Mar 2009
LACORS/HPA Sampling programme egg mix and environmental samples from restaurants and takeaways	May – October 2008
LACORS/HPA Sampling programme ready to eat shelled nuts	Oct 2008 – Mar 2009
F.E.M.S Sampling Programme – Fresh cream cakes	April 2008
F.E.M.S Sampling Programme – additional studies Apr 08 – Mar 09 participation in studies as appropriate	April 08 – March 09
Ready to Eat high risk foods from retail and catering premises	As determined by risk assessed by District Officer
Products from approved premises	Annually
Environmental samples from high risk premises	As determined by risk assessed by District Officer, and in investigation of unsatisfactory food sample results

Appendix 3 **REVIEW AGAINST PREVIOUS YEARS SERVICE PLAN**

Target for 2007-8	Activity	Performance Achieved	Comments	Target for 2007-8
95%	Food Hygiene Inspections LP114a Inspection of Risk Category A-C businesses when due	99.7% achieved over 12months	Target achieved overall	100%
95%	Food Hygiene Inspections LP114b Inspection of Risk Category D businesses when due	99.2% achieved over 12months	Target achieved overall	100%
Planned no. of Samples	Food Sampling Programme	A total of 141 samples were taken	Sampling is undertaken in accordance with the sampling plan	From sampling plan (App 2)
90% within 5 working days	Service requests The Team aims to respond within 5 working days to requests for service	A total of 496 service requests were received 100%reponded to within 5 working days	Target Achieved	100%
100%	Premises licence applications -the Team was consulted on all premises licence applications. Response time 28 days	100% achieved	Target Achieved	100%
67%	%age of food businesses that are 'broadly compliant'	Currently 67%	New target for 2008-9	70%
100%	Food Borne Infectious Disease – the Team aims to respond to all notifications within 2 working days	100%achieved	Target Achieved	100%

