

Subject: Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan
2015/16

Date of Meeting: 17 March 2015

Report of: Director of Public Health

Contact Officer: Name: Nick Wilmot Tel: 29-2157
Email: nick.wilmot@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 To agree the Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan previously known as Food Law Enforcement Service Plan required by the Food Standards Agency.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee agrees the Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2015/2016 set out in the appendix to this report.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 3.1 The Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement requires the production and publication of a service plan. Every local authority is required to develop an annual food enforcement service plan, which provides the basis on which local authorities are monitored and audited by the Food Standards Agency.
- 3.2 To ensure local transparency and accountability, it is a requirement that the Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan is submitted to the relevant member forum for approval.
- 3.3 The attached plan (Appendix A) is an integral part of the organisation of Regulatory Services within Public Health.
- 3.4 In accordance with the Standard outlined in the Framework Agreement the food service is a mix of enforcement, intelligence based work, investigation and education. It is planned that a performance targets of completion of 98% of programmed food safety interventions and 90% of service requests responded to within 5 days.
- 3.5 In addition, areas of current good practice, and opportunities for further improvement, have been identified, both in Food Safety and Food Standards, in section 6.3 of the Service Plan. The targeting of resources to

these areas of work aims to provide a balanced mix of services, which is most likely to benefit the business sector, consumers and other stakeholders. The service will continue to focus enforcement action on the poorer performing businesses.

- 3.6 It is pleasing to note that the general standard of hygiene attained by local businesses continues to improve with the number of those deemed 'broadly compliant', achieving a standard of 3 or more out of 5 on the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS), rising from 92.9% in January 2014 to 94.1% in December 2014.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The plan and activities detailed within it are legally required to comply with the Food Law Code of Practice.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The planning process is governed by the national Food Safety Framework Agreement and so follows the same format each year. In past years draft plans have been circulated to the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership, the Brighton & Hove Citizens panel and Regulatory Services Peer Review.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 That the committee agrees the Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2015/2016 set out in the appendix to this report.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The costs associated with producing and compliance of the proposed Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2015/16 will be met from the Food Safety revenue budget within the Environmental Health service.

Finance Officer Consulted: Steven Bedford

Date: 06/03/2015

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 The Food Standards Agency places a requirement on local authorities to develop and submit a service plan. Local authorities are audited and assessed by the Food Standards Agency on the basis of their food law enforcement service as provided for in their Service Plans. The Food Safety Act 1990 (Code of Practice) places a requirement on local authorities to operate an inspection rating scheme, which determines frequency of intervention of food premises. The Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2015/16 identifies the planned number of interventions for that period.

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken. See 2.4.5 of appendix 1 for profile of food premises registering with the food service during the year 2013/2014. The service is mindful of the greater assistance food business operators require where their first language is not English. Written information, translation and interpreting services are employed where necessary to assist businesses to comply with regulatory requirements.

Any Other Significant Implications:

Public Health Implications:

- 7.4 The Food and Feed Service Plan is seen as key to protecting public health in the City. It is in line with the stated outcome to 'reduce health inequalities and long standing public health issues' as part of the priority of tackling inequalities which states that 'we will continue with high profile enforcement of food and health and safety rules, maintaining our excellent record of environmental health improvements.'

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix:

1. Draft Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2015/2016

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None

Appendix 1 Brighton & Hove City Council Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan 2015/2016

1. Service Aims and Objectives

1.1 Aims and Objectives

- 1.1.1 The food service function of Brighton & Hove City Council is enforced by Environmental Health and Trading Standards staff within Regulatory Services under the Head of Regulatory Services who reports to the Director of Public Health.
- 1.1.2 Environmental Health & Licensing staff are primarily concerned with protecting and improving public health and the environment across the city. Within this service food safety officers work to ensure that food prepared and sold from local establishments is safe. This is achieved by carrying out a programme of interventions at food businesses, sampling and responding to service requests. Wherever practicable links are formed with the business community and all relevant professional groups with the objective of increasing and promoting food safety awareness.
- 1.1.3 The overall objective of the service is to provide a comprehensive food safety service to benefit consumers and the business community, with a considered balance between enforcement, investigation, advice and education.
- 1.1.4 Trading Standards officers aim to provide a comprehensive range of enforcement and advisory services to the community within a statutory framework. Its goal is to contribute, in conjunction with other agencies, to the development of a safe, fair and equitable trading environment for all consumers and businesses, by means of advice, information, education and enforcement.

The core aims being to ensure: -

- § Accurate and informative labelling of food; and
- § That compositional standard of food is maintained.

The objectives being: -

- § To carry out risk-based and intelligence led activities;
- § To undertake screen testing and food sampling to reflect identified areas of concern;
- § To respond appropriately to food complaints and initiate proportionate action;
- § Respond to trader requests in a timely manner; and
- § To educate the public on compositional and labelling issues to improve eating habits.

1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

1.2.1 At the time of drafting this plan Brighton & Hove City Council are in the process of developing the Corporate Plan for 2015-19. The current 2011-2015 Corporate Plan is structured according to its four priorities of:

- § tackling inequalities
- § creating a more sustainable city
- § engaging people who live and work in the city
- § responsible and empowering employer

1.2.2 The service has strong links with these priorities. In particular the outcome to reduce health inequalities and long standing public health issues as part of the priority of tackling inequalities. This includes the desire to continue with high profile enforcement of food safety standards and maintaining an excellent record of environmental health improvements.

1.2.3 As part of the production of the 2015-19 Corporate Plan the views of staff, partners, residents, businesses and other stakeholders will be sought about their priorities for the council and the city against budgetary pressures while also continuing to:

- § protect and enhance our cultural heritage, our seafront and our natural environment
- § safeguard the most vulnerable in our city
- § generate public and private investment in the city to ensure much needed jobs, infrastructure and housing.
- § maintain our focus on improving educational attainment
- § exploit the opportunities from changing technologies to improve customer service and reduce costs.

1.2.4 The Official Feed and Food Control Service Plan is part of the corporate annual planning and development process.

1.2.5 The service has a published Enforcement Policy. This policy is a cornerstone for fair and open enforcement.

1.2.6 The service continually monitors business opinion through satisfaction surveys. This fits in with the priority of engaging people who work in the city. The findings help to ensure that the service meets the requirements of local businesses, residents and visitors and provides a service the city deserves.

2. Background

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

2.1.1 Brighton & Hove is a unitary authority on the south coast of England. It is approximately 50 miles from London. Bounded by the English

Channel to the south and the South Downs to the north, it covers an eight-mile stretch of seafront and extends inland for approximately five miles.

- 2.1.2 The total resident population of Brighton & Hove as at the 2011 Census was 273,369. Demographic information is available from online Brighton & Hove Local Information Service <http://www.bhlis.org/> . Which in it's Summary of Statistics 2014 estimates that the 2012 resident population had grown to 275,800.

Resident Population by Ethnic Group 2011 Census

White British, Irish, mixed and other	243,512
Asian or Asian British	11,278
Black or Black British	4,188

The Summary of Black & Minority Ethnic Communities in Brighton & Hove: A Snapshot Report 2014 estimates that for 1 in 12 (21,833 or 8.3%) of the population aged over three English is not their main or preferred language. Arabic being the most widely spoken language in the city besides English.

- 2.1.3 Tourism plays a major part in the local economy. The Economic Impact of Tourism Brighton & Hove 2012 produced by Tourism South East estimated that £780M worth of direct sales were generated for local businesses by visitors to the city in 2012. In the 2013 Visitor Satisfaction and Growth Potential Report visitors rated good quality food, drink and dining as one of the main attractions of the city.

2.2 Organisational Structure

- 2.2.1 Brighton & Hove City Council is a unitary authority that operates a committee system model. Responsibility for the food safety and standards services is delegates to the Environment & Sustainability Committee.

2.3 Scope of the Feed and Food Service

- 2.3.1 A specialist Food Safety Team within Environmental Health carries out the food safety function. The work of the team includes:-
- § Inspecting food premises:-
 - § The investigation of food safety complaints;
 - § Food poisoning investigations when linked to a premises;
 - § Investigating infectious disease notifications;
 - § Microbiological food sampling;
 - § Food safety training;
 - § Responding to requests for advice;
 - § Initiatives relating to working with the community and businesses;
 - § Taking appropriate steps to publicise and act upon national food alerts;

- § Publicising the food hygiene standards of local businesses;
- § Promoting healthy catering initiatives within local food businesses.

2.3.2 The food standards function is carried out by Trading Standards Officers. The work of the team includes the following: -

- § Risk based enforcement activity;
- § Complaint investigation;
- § Food analysis and investigation;
- § Service Requests from businesses;
- § Education programmes;
- § Reacting to Food Alerts.

2.3.3 Food Standards work is undertaken in conjunction with work on other areas of Trading Standards law. For instance, a programmed food visit will also include giving advice about other matters such as prices, business names and weights and measures. In this way, a comprehensive visit is undertaken so as to minimise any inconvenience caused to the general day-to-day running of the business.

2.3.4 Both Trading Standards and Environmental Health officers have responsibility for enforcing relevant legislation in respect of imported products of animal origin and non animal origin, The food safety team deal with microbiological issues and Trading standards, compositional standards and also contaminants which includes mycotoxins and chemicals.

2.4 Demands on the Feed and Food Service

Food Safety

2.4.1 As at December 2014, there are 3290 food businesses registered. These premises are broken down into the following profile:-

5	Primary Producers
36	Manufacturers/Processors
1	Packers
3	Importers/Exporters
32	Distributors/Transporters
629	Retailers
2583	Restaurants and other Caterers
1	Manufacturers Selling Mainly by Retail
3290	TOTAL

2.4.2 Three food businesses are approved under Regulation (EC) 853/2004 for specific dairy, fish and meat products processing.

2.4.3 The nature of the city causes a considerable seasonal variation in the department's workload. Some businesses only open during spring, summer or school holidays, the intervention programme has to be

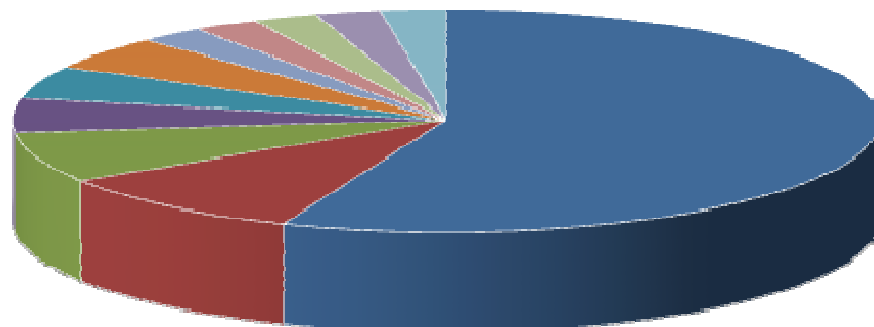
tailored to meet these service needs. There is a dramatic increase in the number of visitors in the spring and summer and this increases the volume of requests for service, enquiries and other reactive work. Outdoor events such as music events, festivals, specialist markets, farmers' markets, open-air concerts and funfairs also add to the seasonality of the workload.

2.4.4 Premises data is captured on Uniform and therefore the premises profile is the same but as the risk assessment is based on the LGR scheme the individual premises have a different inspection frequency for Food Standards. As of the 15 January 2015, 2690 premises were considered to have an 'inspectable risk' for Food Standards work. It has been noted that there is a high turnover of new premises requiring food standards advice.

Access to services

2.4.5 As part of the drive for continued improvement and dialogue with businesses, all establishments are requested to complete feedback questionnaires following inspections. The questionnaires request information on the ethnic origins of the business owners. 63.7% of those who gave an answer between April 2013 and March 2014 identified themselves as White British. The ethnicity of the remaining were as below.

Ethnicity of Food Businesses Where Notified 2013/2014



- 20.4% White Other
- 3.5% Other Asian Background
- 2.7% Other
- 1.8% Chinese
- 1.8% Asian or Asian British
- 1.8% White Irish
- 0.9% Mixed White & Asian
- 0.9% Arab
- 0.9% Polish
- 0.9% Black or Black British-African
- 0.9% Asian or Asian British-Indian

2.4.6 In addition to having a number of key food safety advice leaflets in a variety of languages, the service has the capacity to have any leaflet, letter or other document translated as required. Wherever possible, opportunities are taken to provide information about services to ethnic communities. Where necessary, interpreters accompany officers on planned interventions.

2.4.7 Access to the service is provided by:

- § Visiting either Bartholomew House Customer Services Centre, open hours 8:45am to 4:30pm weekdays or Hove Town Hall, opening hours 8:45am to 5pm;
- § Self-help points across the city including all the main council offices, 14 libraries, leisure centres and some schools;
- § General telephone calls to the Call Contact Centre on (01273) 292161;
- § Advice can also be accessed via the council's website, www.brighton-hove.gov.uk;
- § Email to ehl.food@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

2.4.8 Food Standards complaints are initially received by Citizens Advice Consumer Service. There is a referral protocol regarding food issues requiring enquiries to be sent to Trading Standards within 24 hours.

2.4.9 The food safety team operates a hotline where businesses and consumers can obtain immediate advice from a food safety officer, during office hours. Senior food competent environmental health staff provide cover for an out of hour's service to respond to food safety emergencies and incidents.

2.4.10 New food businesses registering with the service are provided with access to a wide range of online documents, hard copies can be provided on request to assist compliance with food safety legislation.

2.5 Regulation Policy

2.5.1 The Council has a Corporate Enforcement Policy in line with the national Regulators Compliance Code for Enforcers. The enforcement policy is grounded in better regulation principles of proportionality, accountability, consistency, transparency and targeting.

2.5.2 Any breaches of food law noted in businesses where Brighton & Hove City Council has an interest, either as proprietor or responsibility for structural repair, are brought to the attention of the Chief Executive without delay.

3 Service Delivery

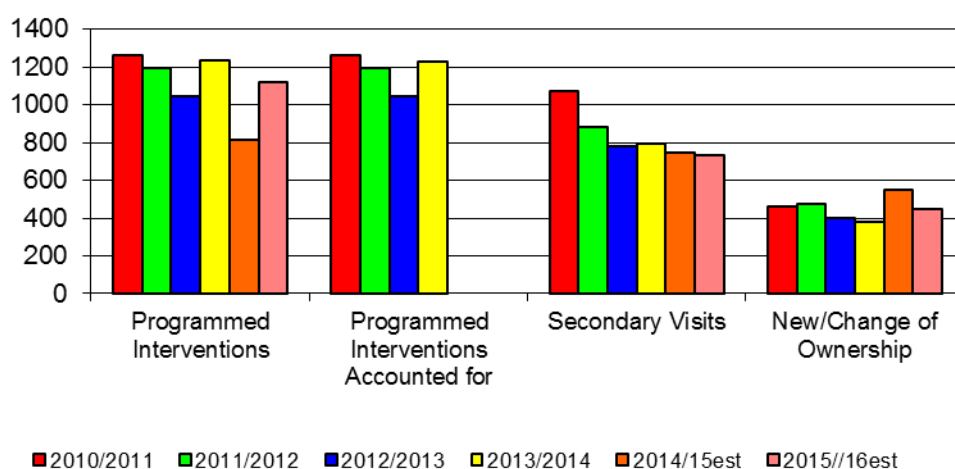
3.1 Interventions at Food and Feedingstuffs Establishments

Food Safety

3.1.1 This section details the planned risk based food safety intervention programme for 2015/2016. The level of achievement in food safety intervention based activity over the past four years is shown in the chart below along with estimates for completion of the current year and 2015/2016.

3.1.2 Inspection intervals are calculated on a risk-based approach. The service sets a target of 98% compliance with the annual programme. Table 3.1.1 estimates the number of planned interventions for the current year and 2015/2016. The target takes account of possible service or operational problems such as a turnover of staff at the end of the year, emergencies or difficulties contacting seasonal businesses or home caterers.

Chart of Intervention-Based Activity 2010-2016



See tables 3.1.1 and 3.1.3 for further details.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
Programmed Interventions	1262	1197	1043	1232	815	1121
Accounted for	1262	1197	1043	1230		
Target %	98 A-D	98 A-D	98 A-D	98 A-D	98 A-D	98 A-D
Achieved%	100 A-D	100 A-D	100 A-D	99.8		

Table 3.1.1 Achievement of Planned Food Safety Inspection/Intervention Programme 2010-16.

3.1.3 The Food Safety Code of Practice contains a mechanism for risk rating each businesses based on factors such as:- if unwrapped high risk-food is handled, prepared or cooked; size of the business; any high-risk operations undertaken; number of customers; vulnerability of the

customers to food-borne illness; standards of hygiene; condition of the structure and confidence in management. By scoring all of these factors an overall risk rating of A to E is arrived at. Category A premises are the highest risk and E the lowest.

- 3.1.4 Category E businesses present a minimal risk due to the limited types of food they handle and/or they cater for a limited number of people. The service operates an alternative enforcement strategy to maintain surveillance of these low risk businesses. This strategy enables the service to provide greater focus on higher risk category A to D establishments.
- 3.1.5 The alternative surveillance of low-risk businesses follows a structured documented procedure: postal questionnaires, sample inspections to check the validity of the information gained and follow up inspections.
- 3.1.6 Migration to the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) has resulted in the need for a greater level of surveillance. The service therefore proposes to alternate between a questionnaire and intervention on the usual frequency for category E establishments. An estimate of the number of interventions for 2014/15 and 2015/16 has been included into table 3.1.2.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15est	15/16est
Questionnaires	277	175	66	191	303	195
Interventions	-	-	77	20	75	73

Table 3.1.2.Premises dealt with under alternative strategy or inspected.

3.1.7 Planned food safety interventions programme for the year 2015/2016 as at December 2014 is:-

Risk Category of Premises	Number of Interventions Due
A	0
B	54
C	369
D	698
Total	1121
Low-risk premises due for intervention	268

3.1.8 The target is to achieve a minimum of 98% of the annual inspection programme. The three product-specific premises approved under Regulation (EC) 853/2004 will receive interventions within the risk rated programme as necessary.

3.1.9 The Food Safety Code of Practice encourages food enforcement services to provide greater focus on the outcomes of activities rather than the traditional approach of reporting on activity alone. Local authority performance is monitored by the Food Standards Agency through the Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS).

3.1.10 A further target is to ensure that at least 85% of food establishments are 'broadly compliant', with a Food Hygiene Rating Score of three or more.

3.1.11 As at December 2014 the level of broadly compliant establishments rated in the FHRS scheme stood at 94.1%. This level of compliance protects public health, the local economy and reputation of the council as a responsible regulator.

3.1.12 **Secondary Interventions** - The main purpose of secondary interventions is to monitor food businesses that fail to comply with significant statutory food safety requirements, or where directly required by Regulation. Failure could include:-

- § Failure to comply with a single requirement that compromises food safety, public health or prejudices consumers;
- § Failure to comply with a number of requirements that, taken together, indicate ineffective management; or
- § Service of a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice or Order.

3.1.13 When considering both the need for and timing of a secondary intervention, consideration is given to the seriousness of any failing, history of the business, confidence in management and the likely effectiveness of this action when compared to any other enforcement option.

3.1.14 Safeguard measures associated with the FHRS permits any food business that does not attain the top rating of five to request a rescore once any necessary issues have been resolved. The revisit must be unannounced and made no sooner than three months after the initial intervention and within three months of the request being made.

3.1.15 Other secondary interventions are categorised as those that are not primary interventions but include:-

- § Additional interventions of establishments that are subject to product-specific food hygiene regulations;
- § Sampling visits;
- § Visits to check on the progress of measures required after a previous intervention;
- § Visits to investigate food and food premises complaints;
- § Visits to discuss implementation of Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points based system;
- § Visits involving training of food handlers;
- § Inspections of premises to assess a licence.

3.1.16 **Interventions at New Businesses/Change of Ownership** - 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.

3.1.17 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 determine a risk rating score. Based on the last five years' data, it is predicted that there will be 450 new businesses or changes of ownership in 2015/2016.

3.1.18 **Monitoring of Vacant Premises** – The service aims to inspect all new food businesses within 28 days of opening. Food safety law does not require prior approval.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15est	15/16est
Secondary inspections	1072	885	777	797	745	735
New Premises or Change in Ownership	461	475	389	383	550	450

Table 3.1.3 Estimate for 2014/2015 and 2015/16 based on data since 2010.

3.1.19 It is estimated that the number of staff required to carry out the programme of inspections plus other visits is 8 full time equivalents. Resources required to undertake secondary visits generated by complaints, enquiries or to undertake sampling are included in the appropriate part of this plan. This is reduced by 0.5 from the 2014/15 plan see 4.2 for further details.

Food Standards

3.1.20 The LGR system requires high-risk premises to be visited each year, medium risk every two years and the low risk every five years. This means that all 93 high risk, 50% of the 1024 medium risk and 20% of the 1573 low risk premises should be visited each year

3.1.21 The target for 2014-15 was to visit 93 high-risk and 512 medium risk premises liable to inspection. Similar targets will remain in place for 2015/16.

- 3.1.22 There is no commitment to visit low risk premises but in 2014-15, 266 low risk premises were visited up to 15th Jan 2015 as a result of project work, complaints and other routine inspections.
- 3.1.23 Approximately 5% of inspections require a follow-up visit. Officers do not work exclusively on the food function. Follow up visits will be made to all premises when a non-compliance is detected and formal action is contemplated.
- 3.1.24 One full time and currently two part time posts make up the Food Team. This equates to 1.6 FTE. About 80% of their time is spent on the food function.
- 3.1.25 **New Businesses** – Trading Standards Officers aim to assess new food businesses within 56 days.
- 3.1.26 **High Risk Premises** - Premises with good management control, no history of contraventions or complaints will be subject to a minimum intervention approach and will only be inspected if they change their product range or complaints are received.
- 3.1.27 **Poorer performing High Risk Premises** -These premises will be inspected every year but may be the subject of additional interventions depending on their compliance. Nationally and locally most food fraud has concerned misdescribed alcoholic drink of unknown provenance.
- 3.1.28 **Medium Risk Premises** - These premises will receive an intervention at two yearly intervals. These interventions will alternate between comprehensive inspections, and a mix of sampling visits, complaint visits or other monitoring or surveillance. At least 50% of the premises liable to an inspection will be subject to a comprehensive visit.
- 3.1.29 **Low Risk Premises** - A programme of interventions will be based on the intelligence received about the individual premises or where the business requests support/advice.

3.2 Feed and Food Complaints

Food Safety

- 3.2.1 It is the policy of this authority to respond promptly to all requests for advice from business. It is the target of the service to respond to 90% of planning application consultations within 10 working days, and all other demand driven work within 5 days.

Year	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
Within target %	96.6	97.7	98.8	97.3	96.2	95.4

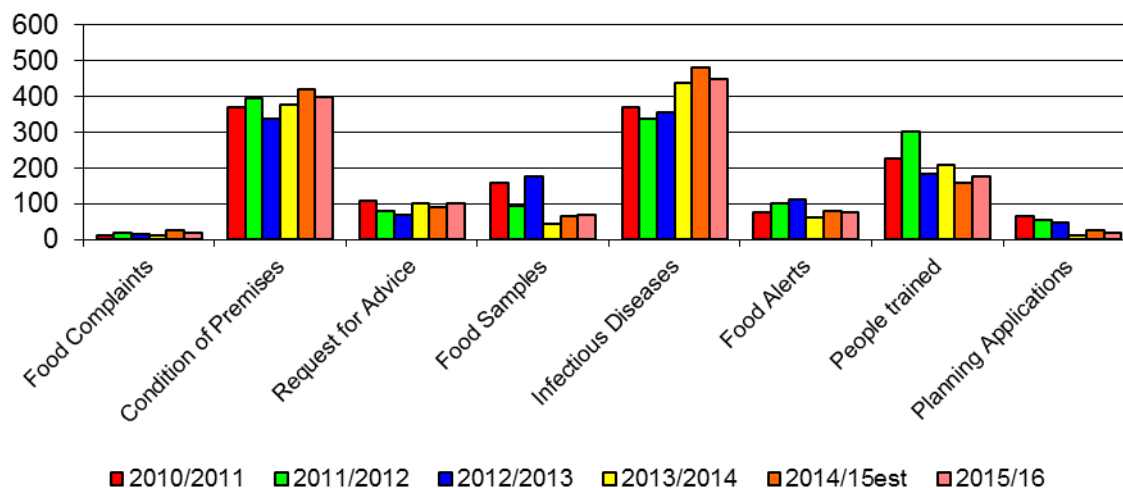
Table 3.2 Percentage of Demand Driven Work within Target Response Time

- 3.2.2 All food complaints received are investigated in accordance with the council's Enforcement Policy and documented procedures. See below for a chart showing the pattern of demand driven work since April 2010 and estimates for the current year and 2015/2016. The source figures for this chart are contained in tables within the relevant part of the plan.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15est	15/16est
Food Complaints	12	20	15	12	26	20
Condition of Premises	371	394	338	377	420	400

Table 3.2.1 Estimate of complaints for current year and 2015/2016 based on data from 2010 onwards.

Chart of Demand Driven Work 2010-2016



See

tables 3.2.1, 3.4.1, 3.4.3, 3.5.1, 3.6 and 3.8 for the source of data.

3.2.3 It is estimated that 1.5 Full Time Equivalent officers will be required to meet this level of service requests.

Food Standards

3.2.4 It is the policy of this authority to respond promptly to all food complaints and to carry out enquiries in accordance with the complaints procedure. The following figures show a final estimate for 2014/15 as the report is generated before the end of the calculated year.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15 est
Number of Complaints	185	104	130	100	120

3.3 Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Principle

3.3.1 Brighton & Hove City Council fully supports the Home Authority principle, and has entered into four formal and 22 informal arrangements with businesses whose operational activity extends outside of the city. Currently there are no primary authority food businesses in the city.

3.4 Advice to Businesses

Food Safety

3.4.1 Advice is given during inspections, by hotline, website, newsletter and as part of the planning application process.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15est	15/16est
No of Requests	109	79	68	100	90	100

Planning Applications	64	56	48	12	24	20
-----------------------	----	----	----	----	----	----

Table 3.4.1 Requests received since 2010 and estimates for the current year and 2015/2016

3.4.2 It is estimated that 0.5 Full Time Equivalent Officer is required to meet this estimated demand.

Food Standards

3.4.3 The level of requests for advice has remained reasonably consistent over several years. The following figures show an estimate for 2014/15 as the report is generated before the end of the calculated year.

08/09	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15 est
192	188	158	137	153	120

3.5 Feed and Food Sampling

Food Safety

3.5.1 A formal arrangement is in place with the Health Protection Agency's Food Water & Environment laboratory based at Porton Down for the analysis of samples that require microbiological examination.

3.5.2 The service participates in national microbiological sampling initiatives coordinated by the Public Health England (PHE), countywide programmes coordinated by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Sussex Food Liaison Group and locally devised surveys. Samples of food and swabs of food-contact surfaces may also be taken as part of routine work and when investigating specific issues at food premises.

3.5.3 During 2014/2015, the service took part in national food sampling programmes:-

- § Study 53 – Ready to use platters used for service.
- § Study 54 – Swabs from takeaways with FHRs scores of 3 or less.

3.5.4 In addition to these nationally agreed programmes, the service took part in Sussex-wide microbiological sampling programme of ready to eat fish and shellfish including Gravlox.

3.5.5 Sampling is also carried out during routine food hygiene inspections to aid officers in the assessment of practices carried out within commercial kitchens and identify any issues. Where any unsatisfactory results were found, corrective action was put in place to ensure the safety of food produced.

3.5.6 As at December 2014 national and the CIEH Sussex Food Liaison Group sampling plans for 2015/15 had yet to be finalised. There are early discussions between local authorities in Kent, Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex to undertake a regional sampling project across the whole area.

3.5.7 It is estimated 0.25 Full Time Equivalent officer will be required for this service.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15est	15/16est
------	-------	-------	-------	-------	----------	----------

No. of samples	160	94	175	44	65	70
----------------	-----	----	-----	----	----	----

Table 3.4.3 Food Safety Samples Submitted 2010-2014 & estimate for the current year and 2015/2016.

3.5.8 Arrangements are in place with the Health Protection Agency laboratory at Porton Down for the analysis of samples that require microbiological examination. The allotted cost for sampling for the financial year 2014/2015 was £11,429.

3.5.9 As at December 2014, the allocation for the year 2015/2016 had not been confirmed.

Food standards

3.5.10 The Public Analyst contract was awarded to Public Analyst Scientific Services (PASS) in 2013. The current allocation of budget for sampling analysis is £4,300. The focus of the contract remains composition, labelling and chemical contamination.

3.5.11 Inspections, investigations and advice for 2014/15 equated to approximately 1.6FTE.

3.5.12 A budget of £ 4,300 was allocated in 14/15 to facilitate the contract with the appointed Public Analyst for the purposes of food analysis. Sampling programmes are informed by FSA initiatives, TSSE regional and local intelligence.

Food Sampling Work undertaken in 2014/2015

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>PROJECT</u>
July-Sept	Nutrition and health claims
July-Sept	Nuts in takeaways
July-Sept	Southampton Colours in takeaways
July-Sept	DNP body building supplements
Year long	Spirits Sampling as a part of the inspection programme
Year long	Home Authority Sampling
Year long	Complaints/Officer initiative

3.5.13 National initiatives are fully funded and take account of potential problems requiring further investigation. The cost for the regional and local projects will be set to allow for contingencies, such as complaints and reacting to food alerts.

3.5.14 During 2012/13 large quantities of illicit alcohol were found in the City. Whilst some of this was smuggled and non duty paid alcohol, a quantity had been found that was not of the nature substance or quality demanded. As this was deemed to be an emerging potential food fraud, officers gave this priority in 2013/14 and the sampling programme took this into account. However the threat does appear to have been reduced but it should be noted that traceability of products remains an on going issue and officers continue to check these products during inspections. Following the national horsemeat crisis officers were asked to undertake sampling work investigating the traceability of meat products in the City. No major issues were found and this was not identified by the FSA as an issue for us to underwork around in 14-15.

3.5.15 During 2014/15 Trading standards have also carried out work funded by the FSA on animal feed which ties in to the Official Feed and Food Controls. The FSA following the lead of the European Food Standards Agency and the Food and Veterinary Office are also pushing controls on imported food and are asking coastal Local authorities to check what is coming in through marinas and small ports. This work will be funded again in 2015-16.

3.5.16 New regulations governing the labelling of food and whether they contain allergens, came into force in 2014. Officers have undertaken work to inform businesses of their obligations under these regulations, by holding business surgeries and providing guidance in the twice yearly Food Safety newsletter as well as during routine visits and via mail shots.

3.5.17 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food-related Infectious Disease
 - Specific infectious diseases are notifiable to the local authority. The department investigates these cases in an attempt to identify the cause of illness and any practical measures to control potential outbreaks. See below for the number of cases investigated from 2010 to 2014 and an estimate of the numbers expected for the current year and 2015/2016. Investigations of outbreaks must commence as soon as practical. In individual notifications, the investigation has to commence within 5 days. It is estimated that 0.5 FTE officer will be required to meet this level of complaints.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15est	15/16est
No. of reports	369	339	357	439	480	480

Table 3.5.1 Notifications for 2014/2015 & 2015/2016 based on data from 2010 onwards.

3.5.18 The number of notifications included in table 3.5.1 has been corrected to discount those illnesses not associated with food such as mumps, measles and hepatitis. The estimate of the total notifications for the current year has been increased due to the effect of an increase in *Shigella flexneri* cases.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15est	15/16est
Campylobacter	222	198	174	222	330	350
Salmonella	33	35	29	27	12	10

Table 3.5.2 Estimate of Number of specific notifications for 2014/2015 & 2015/2016

3.5.19 Food-borne illness can be contracted as a result of a number of reasons including poor food handling in the home or foreign travel. It is therefore difficult to attribute any increase or reduction to one source.

3.6 Feed/Food Safety Incidents

3.6.1 An out of hours emergency service is staffed by senior staff who are suitably authorised to carry out the full range of food safety functions including responding to emergency food safety incidents.

3.6.2 Information regarding national food safety alerts, such as product recalls from the FSA, is received during office hours via the national alert system.

3.6.3 The Environmental Health Manager (Food Safety) and senior staff within the Food Safety Team are registered on the rapid alert system to receive food alerts through a text message scheme direct to their mobile phones. The information contained in the food incidents is distributed and acted on as deemed necessary.

Year	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15est	15/16est
Food Alerts	76	102	113	60	80	75

Table 3.6 Food Alerts for the current year and 2014/15 based on data from 2009 onwards.

3.7 Liaison with Other Organisations

Food Safety

3.7.1 There are a number of arrangements in place with other professions and local authorities to promote consistency, provide joint projects and develop services: -

- § The Environmental Health Manager is the Chair of the Sussex Food Liaison Group which develops common approaches to regulation across Sussex and Vice-Chair of the national Food Hygiene Focus Group
- § An Environmental Health Officer attends the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health's Sussex Food Study Group which develops joint procedures and practices. Brighton & Hove will chair this group for 2015/16.
- § An officer attends the regular liaison meetings with Children's Services and school caterers.
- § The Health Development team develops initiatives such as promoting breastfeeding or making it easier for mothers to breastfeed their babies while in restaurants.
- § District Control of Infection Committee, Community Consultant in Disease Control reviews procedures and agrees communicable disease outbreak and food poisoning control measures.
- § The authority is a member of the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership. The partnership includes representatives from local businesses and community groups, community workers and members of the Sustainability Commission. The Partnership raises awareness of food producers in supporting health, the economy and the environment increasing access to nutritious, safe, affordable food and providing a network for information exchange.
- § A liaison arrangement is in place with Sussex Career Services and local schools to enable teachers and students from Brighton & Hove to gain work experience.

This work is accounted for in the reactive work estimate of resources required.

Food Standards

3.7.2 The team works closely with 18 other Trading Standards Services in the southeast that together make up Trading Standards South East (TSSE). Activities include liaison on all trading standards issues, co-ordinated activities, sampling and advice projects and sharing of information via the TSSE intranet. As well as this officers use the national knowledge hub which allows access to trading standards services nationally. The team also work directly with the FSA and receive food alerts which identify problem products which we can move quickly to remove from the food chain at a local level.

3.8 Feed and Food Safety and Standards Promotional Work, and Other Non-Official Controls Interventions

3.8.1 The city Health and Wellbeing Board's strategy focuses on priority areas where it can make the greatest impact. The strategy includes healthy weight and good nutrition. The Food Safety Team work with Brighton & Hove Food partnership promoting healthy menu options via the Healthy Choice Award in a diverse range of settings targeting health inequality: nurseries, breakfast clubs and after-school clubs and care homes.

3.8.2 The service is planning a year long imitative working with catering outlets in the city to encourage the promotion of healthy food choices. A project officer will be engaged to take this imitative forward.

3.8.3 The service organises a number of food hygiene training courses per year. The food safety training activity April 2013 to March 2014 and total numbers of people trained are given below. The CIEH Level 2 Award Food Safety in Catering course is a full day course aimed at food handlers.

3.8.4 During 2013/14 208 people were trained on the Level 2 course.

Year	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15est	2015/16est
Trained	225	303	184	208	160	175

Table3.8 Total Training Undertaken Since 2010

3.8.5 14 Level 2 Awards in Food Safety in Catering courses have already been scheduled for 2015/16. The service also offers the CIEH Level 3.

3.8.6 The service took part in Food Safety Week during June 2014 by organising displays in Customer Service Centres at Bartholomew House, Hove Town Hall, Brighton Town Hall and Hove Library.

4. Resources

4.1 Financial Allocation

Food Safety

4.1.1 The proposed 2015/16 budget for the Food Safety service has yet to be set. It is envisaged that the service will be reduced by £20,000 on the 2014/15 budget, see 4.2 for further details.

Food Standards

4.1.2 It is difficult to detail the time spent on the food standards function as it is carried out during a comprehensive inspection. Time monitoring is not currently used to apportion time to the food function. Cost of the food standards function in 2014/15 was as follows based on the percentage of time officers spend on the food function outlined above and below:

Staffing Inspection, complaints and advice	
Management/Support	£ 3,200
Food Team	£42,170

Total	£45,370
Purchases	£ 500
Analysis	£ 4,300
Total	£ 5,000
Total	£ 56,170

The budget has not yet been set for 2015/16 but similar funding levels are envisaged as 2014/15.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

Food Safety

- 4.2.1 Establishment of the Food Safety Team for the year 2015/2016 is 11.01 full time equivalent field officers plus two full time equivalent administrative support staff and management, broken down as follows:-
1 x Environmental Health Manager
2 x Senior Environmental Health Officers
3.85 x Environmental Health Officers
4.16 x Senior Technical Officers
- 4.2.2 Establishment for the food safety service is reduced by 0.44 FTE. This has been possible due to reduction in the frequency of inspection for better performing businesses contained in the 2014 Food Safety Code of Practice.
- 4.2.3 All enforcement staff comply with strict guidelines governing qualifications and competencies before they are permitted to undertake food safety duties. All Senior Technical Officers hold Higher Certificates in Food Premises Inspection and are able to inspect all risk categories of food businesses. All Environmental Health Officers are qualified to undertake inspections of all risk categories of food businesses.
- 4.2.3 Six officers within the other Environmental Health & Licensing Teams retain competencies to undertake food safety inspections. All food competent officers must undergo a minimum of 10 hours food safety training per year to retain their authorisation to undertake food safety inspections. In addition to the competencies and qualifications required by the Food Safety Code of Practice, officers engaged in food safety inspections must have undergone additional 'Food Hygiene Rating Scheme' consistency training. These pool of officers provide additional flexible resources.

Food Standards

- 4.2.4 The Inspection and Sampling Team is responsible for Food Standards Inspection. The proportion of time allocated to this function in 2014/15 was estimated as follows:-

Support	0.05
Management	0.05
Food Staff	1.6
Total	1.7 FTE

4.3 Staff Development Plan

- 4.3.1 The Authority has a structured appraisal and development system. During staff appraisals, individual training needs and any gaps in competence are identified. The information is used to produce individual training and development plans for each officer for the coming year.
- 4.3.2 Through this system, the service ensures that all food competent officers receive sufficient good quality focused food safety training to comply with relevant Codes of Practice and professional membership schemes.
- 4.3.3 The service currently has three staff undergoing part time or distance learning to become Environmental Health Officers.
- 4.3.4 During 2015/16 two officers are due to attend additional training to convert their Food Safety Premises Inspection qualification to the Certificate of Food Control in readiness for possible amendments to qualification requirements in the Food Safety Code of Practice.

5.0 Quality Assessment

5.1 Quality Assessment and Internal Monitoring

Food Safety

- 5.1.1 The service has a documented procedure relating to food safety duties. Internal audits are carried out to ensure compliance with these procedures. The service is accredited to ISO 9001 and externally audited by the British Standards Institute.
- 5.1.2 The service actively seeks the views of businesses by giving out post-inspection questionnaires to traders inspected. In 2013/2014, 128 questionnaires were returned. The key findings of these returns were:-
- § 97.6% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied that Brighton & Hove City Council had done all that it could to help deal with their premises inspection.
 - § 98.4% of respondents understood the purpose of the visit to their premises.
 - § 99.2% found the information given to them by the visiting officer easy or very easy to understand.

Similar high levels of satisfaction were recorded from questionnaires returned in the previous seven years.

Food Standards

5.1.3 We aim to continually improve the level of service provided. Procedures are implemented and reviewed where necessary to incorporate identified improvements.

6. Review

6.1 Review Against the Service Plan.

Food Safety

6.1.1 In addition to the quality checks detailed in 5.1, performance is reviewed against the Service Plan by comparing the number of interventions achieved against the number programmed. Monthly statistical reports are produced so that performance can be closely monitored and managed through the year. Any problems are promptly identified and resolved through management reviews, team meetings and monthly one to ones between field staff and their line manager.

6.1.2 Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plans are produced and reviewed on an annual basis by management review and consideration by elected members through the committee structure and Full Council.

6.1.3 In the year 2013/2014, 99.7% of the due food safety interventions were accounted for. This included interventions carried out and businesses that ceased trading before they could receive their planned intervention. 389 interventions were undertaken of new businesses or premises that had changed ownership.

6.1.4 At December 2014, 94.1% of the food businesses in the city were deemed to be 'broadly compliant', or better ie a Food Hygiene Rating Score of three or better.

6.1.5 From April 2014 to mid January 2015, 20 Hygiene Improvement Notices were served and undertook five successful prosecutions and a further two cases in chain.

Food Standards

6.1.6 Service reviews are carried out on a monthly basis to check that the inspection programme is on target and to ensure that projects are being completed in the agreed timescale.

6.1.7 The Service Reviews indicate that the service is on target to achieve the interventions programme.

6.1.8 During staff one-to-one's each officer's performance is monitored, to identify good performance and any areas of improvement.

6.1.9 Complaints are responded to within the stated timescales.

6.2 Identification of Any Variation from the Service Plan

Food Safety

6.2.1 Reviewing the final outcome of 2013/2014 and the current prediction, as at December 2014, for 2014/15 against last year's Service Plan shows three probable areas of variation.

- § The 2014/15 Service Plan predicted a food safety programme of 1073 interventions. Amendments to the required frequency of interventions for better performing businesses in the Food Safety Code of Practice introduced in April 2014 has reduced this to 815.
- § The 2014/15 Service Plan also predicted that there would be 450 inspections of new businesses. Between 1st April and 31st December 368 such inspections had already been undertaken with another 120 businesses registered and awaiting inspection. Estimate for the total number for the year has now been increased to 550. This increase is attributable to a greater number of home caterers start ups and validation checks at low risk businesses identifying change of ownership.
- § The 2013/14 Service Plan amended the estimate that there would be 1200 secondary interventions undertaken, see 3.1.12 for a definition. This was increased from a former estimate of 720. The actual rise was to 797.

Food Standards

6.2.2 There was no significant variation from the plan.

6.3 Areas of Improvement

Food Safety

6.3.1 As a result of publishing the food safety standards through the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme standards generally are continuing to improve year on year. Table 6.1 demonstrates the improvement which has been built on the local Scores on the Doors scheme since migration to the national scheme in March 2012.

FHRS rating	April 2012	Jan 2013	Jan 2014	Dec 14
0	6	3	4	5
1	114	113	95	74
2	86	92	83	89
3	284	265	266	226
4	508	589	638	660
5	1311	1377	1469	1604
Total	2309	2624	2555	2851

Table 6.1. Number of food businesses in each FHRS Rating

6.3.2 The FSA produce national performance data for local authority food services based on information received in annual returns. It is pleasing to note that Brighton & Hove City Council, which is eight largest of the 56 English Unitary authorities by number of food establishments, when compared to that group was second when measured by the number of planned interventions accounted for with 99.95% achieved in 2013/14.

Food Standards

6.3.3 Advancements have been made in the delivery of food law enforcement. There are many examples of joined up working and co-operation where co-ordinated sampling programmes and officer training feature highly. However, there are still areas for improvement. They are as follows:

- § Targeting beer, wines and spirits misdiscription and traceability, this work links in with the Licensing Authority function and Alcohol Project Board.
- § Improved use of the Environmental Health newsletter to provide businesses with information.
- § Increasing the number of voluntary contacts by businesses
- § Developing the access to on-line business advice.
- § Better publicity for the healthy eating education message.
- § Developing links with schools
- § Increasing and maintaining the competency and professional development of food officers.
- § Establishing consumer concerns and reflecting this in local activity.

