

FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The appended Food Safety Service Plan is submitted to Members for approval.
- 1.2 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) started to require local authorities to produce an annual plan from 2001.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In March 2001, the FSA issued a "Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement", which consists of four main elements:
 - Service Planning Guidance
 - The Standard
 - Monitoring Form and Guidance Notes
 - Audit Scheme
- 2.2 The Service Planning Guidance and The Standard set out the FSA's expectations on the planning and delivery of food law enforcement.
- 2.3 The Monitoring Scheme builds on existing arrangements under which local authorities have to submit returns on food law enforcement activity to the FSA.
- 2.4 Under the Audit Scheme the FSA will be conducting audits of the food enforcement services of selected local authorities taking in account information generated by existing and new monitoring arrangements. Local authorities selected for audit will be assessed against the criteria set out in the Standard. The audit programme came into operation on 1st April 2001.
- 2.5 Powers to enable the FSA to monitor and audit local authorities are contained in the Food Standards Act 1999.
- 2.6 The appended Plan, which is for 2005/2006, refers to documents 1 to 3. These are not appended because they are the following corporate documents: Housing, Health & Community Care's Enforcement Policy (1); Enforcement Concordat (2); the Constitution (3).

3 FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

- 3.1 The FSA sees Service Plans as an important part of the process to ensure national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally. They consider that plans will also:
- focus debate on key delivery issues;
 - provide an essential link with financial planning;
 - set objectives for the future, and identify major issues that cross service boundaries; and
 - provide a means of managing performance and making performance comparisons.
- 3.2 The Framework Agreement provides local authorities with a service plan template to ensure that all the areas of the food enforcement service covered by the food law enforcement standard are included in the plan, whilst allowing scope for the inclusion of any locally defined objectives.
- The template ensures that local authorities will include in their service plans:
- Information about the service they provide;
 - the means by which they will provide those services, including the various requirements of the standard;
 - the means by which they will meet any relevant performance targets or performance standards set out under, for example, Best Value;
 - a review of performance in order to address any variance from meeting the requirements of the service plan.
- 3.3 The FSA needs the plans in a common format to assess and compare local authorities' delivery of the service. A common format also greatly facilitates comparisons made by local authorities, including during a Best Value Review. The Best Value framework is recognised as playing a central role in helping local authorities to plan and deliver their services.
- 3.4 Service plans are considered an expression of local authorities' own commitment to the development of the food service. It should demonstrate that local authorities are providing a balanced service in terms of enforcement, education, advice, assistance and guidance.
- 3.5 A copy of the service plan has been sent to the Chambers of Trade and Federation of Small Businesses for comment.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In addition to preparing an annual Service Plan, the FSA require local authorities to produce documented procedures for every part of their food law enforcement service and to have internal and third party peer review systems to verify its conformance against the Standard. In an attempt to minimise the adverse effect of this requirement on other work (including programmed inspections and response to complaints and applications), it is planned that all documents will be complete and the review systems will be in place by April 2006.
- 4.2 The Budget Book 2005/06 includes all the financial requirements for the Service Plan.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The FSA have default powers should a local authority fail to comply with their requirements.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

To approve the Food Safety Service Plan and the plan to complete the production of all food law enforcement documents and to implement a peer review system by April 2006.

G Woolhouse

Head of Housing, Health & Community Care

Background Papers:

None

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**HOUSING, HEALTH & COMMUNITY CARE
FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2005/2006**

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1.0 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	
1.1 Aims and Objectives	<p>The Housing, Health & Community Care Service is committed to ensuring that the highest standards are maintained throughout the district in food premises for which they are the Enforcing Authority, in order to protect both employees and members of the public.</p> <p>Environmental Health staff will adopt an approach to enforcement which will encompass the investigation of cases of food poisoning or suspected food poisoning and food complaints as well as inspections based on risk assessment so as to make effective use of staff resources allocated. Staff will act within the Department's overall enforcement policy (Document 1) but due regard will be had to guidance from recognised bodies. Rochford District Council has adopted the Enforcement Concordat (Document 2) and therefore staff will carry out activities in this service plan in accordance with the Concordat.</p> <p>Education plays an important part in improving food hygiene standards and therefore Environmental Health staff will carry out the activities in this service plan with an educative approach wherever possible.</p>
1.2 Links to Corporate Aims and Plans	<p>This service supports Rochford District Council's Performance Plan for 2005. In particular to work towards the Corporate Aims, 'Work towards a Safer and More Caring Community' and 'Improve the Quality of Life for People in our District by 'Providing Quality, Cost Effective Services'.</p> <p>This fits with the key themes of 'Feeling Safe' and 'Healthy Living'</p> <p>We follow all of the Councils values to: 'Act with integrity', 'Be open and transparent about what we do', 'Respect others and treat people courteously and equally', 'Be responsive to customer needs and requests', 'Always try to improve what we do' and 'Work with others to improve what we do both directly and through partnership working'.</p>

2.0	BACKGROUND	
2.1	Profile of Rochford District	Please see the website/intranet.
2.1.1	Profile of the Housing, Health & Community Care Service	Please see the Constitution (Document 3) and the intranet/website.
2.2	Organisational Structure	
2.2.1	Rochford District Council	Please see the Constitution and the intranet/website.
2.2.2	Housing, Health & Community Care	Please see the Constitution and the intranet/website.
2.2.3	Manager responsible for Food Service	Safety, Food and Regulation Manager.
2.2.4	Specialist Services	Samples for analysis are submitted to a Public Analyst at a laboratory accredited for the purposes for analysis and which appears on the list of official food control laboratories. Samples for examination are submitted to a food examiner at a laboratory accredited for the purpose of examination and which appears on the list of official food control laboratories.

2.3	The Scope of the Food Service	
2.3.1		Establish and maintain up to date register of all food premises in the district.
2.3.2		Inspect all food premises on a risk based, rolling programme in accordance with Food Safety Act 1990, Code of Practice and Practice Guidance and take enforcement action as necessary. Most planned inspections will be carried out by a contractor.
2.3.3		Carry out visits and inspections to food premises as necessary within the plan period, including revisits and investigative visits.
2.3.4		Investigate and resolve all food complaints and all complaints relating to a food business, including refuse, litter, odours, pests, drainage etc, except noise.
2.3.5		Provide advice and assistance to businesses and consumers on food related issues.
2.3.6		Receive and act on all food hazard warnings.
2.3.7		Investigate all food within the district that might be contaminated or illegally imported and take necessary action. Seize, detain and destroy, as necessary, unfit or illegally imported food.
2.3.8		Monitor the movement of unfit food into and out of the Rochford District area.
2.3.9		Take action to close food premises found to present an imminent risk to health.
2.3.10		Act as Statutory Consultee in relation to Liquor Licensing.
2.3.11		Provide advice to the Planning Service on food related issues.

2.3.12	Identify premises requiring a Butchers Shop Licence and prepare them for grant and renewal.
2.3.13	Identify premises processing, handling and storing meat products and preparations, and prepare them for approval.
2.3.14	Identify premises processing, handling and storing dairy, fish and/or egg products and prepare them for approval.
2.3.15	Identify premises processing, handling and storing food(s) that fall under other specific regulations and ensure that they comply with such regulations.
2.3.16	Undertake a food sampling programme in accordance with the Health Protection Agency, Eastern, Chelmsford Food, Water and Environmental Laboratory Sampling Programme and taking account of current food premises.
2.3.17	Facilitate food hygiene training as necessary, by independent training organisations.
2.3.18	Comment on proposed food legislation, codes of practice and other official documents as necessary and as requested.
2.3.19	Provide appropriate export certification as requested by food companies in the district.
2.3.20	Carry out a health and safety inspection of all premises where the sale of food is the main activity on a risk based rolling programme in accordance with LAC 67/1, and take enforcement action as necessary including revisits.
2.3.21	Investigate and resolve all serious complaints about health and safety where the sale of food is the main activity.

2.3.22	Receive all reports of accidents where the sale of food is the main activity and investigate as necessary using HELA guidance.																					
2.3.23	Investigate all reports of a food poisoning/borne outbreak.																					
2.4	<div><div>Demands on the Food Service</div><div>As at 1 April 2005 the Housing, Health & Community Care Division’s database has identified that it is responsible for enforcing Food Safety in 601 food premises within the Rochford District. According to the Food Safety Act 1990 Code of Practice, Risk Categories for these premises can be broken down as follows:</div><table><thead><tr><th><u>Risk Category</u></th><th><u>Number of Premises</u></th><th><u>C.O.P. Inspection Frequency</u></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>A =</td><td>8</td><td>6 months</td></tr><tr><td>B =</td><td>47</td><td>12 months</td></tr><tr><td>C =</td><td>211</td><td>18 months</td></tr><tr><td>D =</td><td>71</td><td>2 years</td></tr><tr><td>E =</td><td>247</td><td>3 years</td></tr><tr><td>Unrated =</td><td>17</td><td>These are 14 new premises where the risk rating will be determined following an inspection, and 3 Approved Meat Products premises which have to be inspected 3 times per year</td></tr></tbody></table><div>The estimated number identified as Manufacturing premises are 8 The estimated number identified as Retail premises are 173 The estimated number identified as Catering Premises are 400</div></div>	<u>Risk Category</u>	<u>Number of Premises</u>	<u>C.O.P. Inspection Frequency</u>	A =	8	6 months	B =	47	12 months	C =	211	18 months	D =	71	2 years	E =	247	3 years	Unrated =	17	These are 14 new premises where the risk rating will be determined following an inspection, and 3 Approved Meat Products premises which have to be inspected 3 times per year
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	<p>As at 1st April 2005 the number of approved, licensed premises under:</p> <table><tr><td>Meat Regulations</td><td>=</td><td>3</td><td>(Meat Products)</td></tr><tr><td>Fish Regulations</td><td>=</td><td>3</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Butchers' Shops Licences</td><td>=</td><td>9</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>No particular external factors that may impact on this service have been identified. There are two languages other than English identified as being significant among food handlers and proprietors within the district. These are Bengali and Chinese, however the majority of proprietors are able to speak adequate English or have somebody present at the premises that can translate. In any cases where they may be language difficulties the service would contact Essex Police (01268 775533) for details of an interpreter or use a community interpreting service provided by Medway Council (01634 335578).</p> <p>A number of pamphlets and leaflets on food safety are also available in different languages within the food service at Rochford District. These languages are not seen as placing a particular demand on the food service.</p>	Meat Regulations	=	3	(Meat Products)	Fish Regulations	=	3		Butchers' Shops Licences	=	9	
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2.5	Enforcement Policy	This service operates to a documented enforcement policy.											
3.0	SERVICE DELIVERY												
3.1	Inspection Programmes												
3.1.1	Programmed	The number of Programmed Food Hygiene Inspections for the period is = 292 .											
3.1.2	Carry Over	The number of Programmed Food Hygiene Inspections carried over from the last financial year is = 8 .											

3.1.3	Total	Therefore the total number of Programmed Food Hygiene Inspections for the period is = 300 . (See Appendix 1 for a breakdown)
3.1.4	Target	The target for this year is to achieve: Risk Categories A to C = 98% Risk Categories D to F = 98% All Categories = 98%
3.1.5	Revisits	The estimated number of revisits for this plan period is = 75 .
3.1.6	Non-Programmed inspections	The estimated number on non-programmed inspections is = 35 .
3.1.7	Other	The estimated number of Butchers' Shop Licences requiring renewal = 9 . The Butchers' Shops Licence applications must be determined within 28 days of receipt.
3.2	Food Complaints	All food complaints received including anonymous complaints are investigated in accordance with the good enforcement principle of targeting, transparency, consistency and proportionality. The estimated number for this plan period is = 100 .
3.3	Home Authority Principle	There are no formal Home Authority Agreements set up for any food business within Rochford District. The Council is, however, the originating Authority for 2 manufacturing businesses which distribute their products nationwide. Advice on standards is provided to other Councils following complaints made to them about purchases made from outlets outside Rochford District.
3.4	Advice to Business	Advice is provided to existing or proposed food businesses, members of the public, other Council Service Departments and other persons. Advice is mainly person to person whilst Officers are carrying out visits/inspections but may also be following a telephone call or letters to the Housing, Health and Community Care Division.

<p>3.5 Food Sampling</p>	<p>Officers aim to give advice in accordance with recognised guidance and codes of practice, and a range of advisory leaflets is available.</p> <p>The estimated number for the plan period is = 250.</p> <p>The Council has regular meetings with the Chamber of Trade and Federation of Small Businesses, who have been consulted on the Division's Enforcement Policy.</p> <p>Food sampling for microbiological contamination is carried out in accordance with the Public Health Laboratory Service (Chelmsford)/Essex Food Group Sampling Programme and taking account of current food premises.</p> <p>The estimated number of samples to be taken for this period is = 200.</p> <p>It is estimated that there will be no charge from the Health Protection Agency Eastern, Chelmsford Food, Water and Environmental Laboratory Service to analyse this number of samples.</p> <p>The service also enables officers in the food team to carry out random sampling of foods where it is felt necessary. This may occur following a programmed or otherwise visit to food premises or via a food complaint received by the service.</p>
<p>3.6 Outbreak Control and Inspection Disease Control</p>	<p>Food complaint samples are analysed by a Public Analyst or examined by a food examiner (the Health Protection Agency Eastern Laboratory at Chelmsford or an entomologist) if necessary.</p> <p>It is estimated that 8 food complaint samples will be submitted for analysis or examination, and provision in the budget has been made.</p>

10.13

<p>3.9 Food Safety Promotion</p>	<p>The service also advises and liaises with other services within Rochford District Council, including: Building Control, Planning, the Environmental Protection Team and the Licensing Team. The service is consulted on planning applications involving food premises.</p> <p>Food safety promotion on cooking turkeys and barbecues is carried out during the autumn and spring respectively. Leaflets are made available at the 2 Council offices, community centres, butchers, etc., and are given to food poisoning cases. An article on these subjects is included in the autumn and spring editions of Rochford Matters, the free Council newspaper, and a press release is sent to local newspapers.</p> <p>Participate in the National Food Safety Week by organising a poster competition for school children on the importance of hand washing.</p> <p>Participate in the National Food Safety Week by organising a public food information day at Rayleigh Civic Suite.</p> <p>Advise schools on providing safe packed lunches.</p> <p>A food sampling advisory leaflet with advice on microbiological standards and food safety is provided following each programmed inspection. It is also sent following an acceptable or unsatisfactory sampling result with a link to the Council's food web.</p> <p>Comprehensive food safety information is available on Rochford District Council's website, and a letter was sent to all food businesses when the website was created.</p>
<p>3.10 Export Certification</p>	<p>Export certificates for manufacturers within the district exporting various food are provided.</p> <p>The estimated number of certificates requested during this period is 0.</p>

4.0 RESOURCES	
4.1 Financial Allocation	<p>The overall total expenditure for the Environmental Health Service is £1,034,400. Within this budget, the food service costs are not currently separately identified. From this amount the food service is not currently allocated a specific amount.</p> <p>It is therefore not possible to determine whether there is a change in real terms in expenditure on the food service compared to the last financial year.</p> <p>Approximately £21,500 will be spent engaging a food contractor to carry out planned inspections and an audit. This is included in the overall total expenditure.</p> <p>In March 2005, the Health Protection Agency allocated Essex Authorities a sampling budget of £82,551. Samples can be submitted to that costing without Councils being charged. Essex Authorities are now deciding how to allocate this total figure between individual Authorities.</p> <p>Details of the budget for salaries, travel, subsistence, consultancy, analytical fees are contained in Rochford District Councils Budget Book 2005/2006.</p> <p>No budget is separately allocated for prosecutions or legal action taken as a result of action under this service, but are provided for within the Legal Service's budget.</p>

<p>4.2 Staffing Allocation</p>	<p>The staff available for this period is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Safety Food and Regulation Manager 1 Principal Environmental Health Officer (EHO) 1 Contract EHO 1 Senior EHO 1 Part-time Senior EHO 1 Part-time Senior EHO 2 Environmental Health Assistants (EHA) 3 Administrative staff <p>This staffing allocation is not solely for this service plan. These officers also carry out the Health and Safety, Animal Welfare Licensing, Outbreak Control and Infectious Disease, Public Entertainment licensing and Control of Trading Licensing duties. The administrative staff also support the entire Housing, Health and Community Care Service.</p> <p>It is estimated that the above staffing levels will provide sufficient resources to carry out the service delivery outlined in Paragraph 3.0.</p> <p>It is estimated that 3 full time equivalents work on food safety.</p>
<p>4.3 Staff Development Plan</p>	<p>This service supports the Corporate Aims for Rochford District Council. The staff covering this service will continue to be encouraged, motivated and trained to develop their potential and use their talents for the benefit of the people of the district.</p> <p>This service identifies training and development needs by an annual performance and development review of all staff.</p> <p>The training budget is allocated primarily to those staff in the whole service that are identified as requiring further training to develop their professional and technical skills for the job that they are required to carry out and to deliver Corporate Objectives.</p>

	<p>Budget provision is also available for minor, short ad hoc training courses that become available.</p> <p>For this plan period, the following training needs have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Minor ad hoc courses when they become available- 1 week Food Microbiology Course at Leeds or Warwick for 1 EHO <p>Cascade training is provided by the officer attending an external training course to other officers in the service.</p> <p>Periodic meetings are organised to discuss matters and issues of consistency arising under this service plan area.</p> <p>Minutes of the Essex Chief Environmental Health Officers Food Group and the Food Study Group are circulated to officers in the food service.</p> <p>The Housing, Health & Community Care service and the Council supports Environmental Health Officers that wish to obtain corporate membership of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (C.I.E.H) by taking the Assessment of Professional Competence (APC).</p> <p>All E.H.Os that are members of the C.I.E.H. are required to undergo at least 20 hours of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) per year. Whilst officers are responsible for monitoring the amount they have done in a year the service recognises this need and supports staff in achieving the minimum amount required by the CPD scheme. In house training may be organised throughout the year by individuals.</p>
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	<p>Every officer authorised to carry out food hygiene inspections and enforcement will receive structured on-going training, which may take the form of in house training, formal visits or vocational visits. The minimum ongoing/update training is 10 hours per year and is recorded.</p> <p>Officers who have not enforced food law for some time are put through structured revision training before resuming food law enforcement duties. The minimum revision training is 15 hours and is recorded.</p> <p>Officers returning to food law enforcement duties after an absence of more than 3 years are monitored by a more senior officer experienced in food law enforcement for a minimum period of 3 months.</p>
<p>5.0 QUALITY ASSESSMENT</p>	<p>Before new officers undertake food law enforcement duties independently, they are supervised and monitored by a more senior officer experienced in food law enforcement for up to 6 months.</p> <p>The following peer reviews are carried out:</p> <p><u>Contractor</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All letters are checked for compliance with codes of practise and guidance, and to determine the need for a revisit; ➤ All computer inspection documents are checked for accuracy of the risk rating and to agree when a rating has been reduced; ➤ All reports of inspections are checked for accuracy; ➤ 1 full audit using Section's "Management Quality Audit Form" is carried out on a completed high risk inspection per month. This involves a desk-top check and a visit. Therefore, 12 audits to be carried out for the period. The contractor will carry out approximately 198 high risk inspections. Therefore the audit rate is $(12/198) \times 100 = 6.06\%$.

	<p><u>Staff – Food EHOs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A full audit using the Section's "Management Quality Audit Form" is carried out on 5% of all high risk inspections. This involves a desk-top check and a visit. It is estimated that the Food EHOs will carry out about 12 high risk inspections each per year. Therefore, 1 audit to be carried out each for the period. ➤ A full audit using the Section's "Management Quality Audit Form" is carried out on 5 complaints/enquiries received each per year. <p>A Third Party audit of the Inspection Process will be carried out by a contractor during the period.</p>
6.0 REVIEW	
6.1 Review against the service plan	<p>An annual review against the service plan is carried out.</p> <p>In addition, performance is monitored monthly and a quarterly report is submitted to Members.</p>
6.1.1 Food Hygiene Inspections	<p>The review below is for the plan period financial year 2004-2005.</p> <p>The target for the last plan period was to achieve 98% of programmed inspections for high risk premises (categories A, B and C) and 98% for other premises (D, E and F).</p> <p>The actual percentage achieved was 97.59% and 97.94% respectively.</p>
6.1.2 Revisits	<p>The number of revisits carried out was 60 (estimate 75).</p>

6.1.3	Service Request	The number of service requests (food complaints and advice to businesses) received was 344 (estimate 350) .
6.1.4	Food Sampling	The number of food samples taken was 254 (estimate 250) .
6.1.5	Outbreak control and infectious disease control	The number of notifications received requiring investigation was 120 (estimate 80) . The number of outbreaks was 0 (estimate 1) .
6.1.6	Food Hazard warnings	The number of food hazard warnings received was 134 (estimate 80) .
6.1.7	Export Certificates	The number of export certificates issued was 0 (estimate 0) .
6.1.8	Notices	The following number of 'notices' were issued <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - informal written warning letters: 152. - Improvement Notices served: 0. - Prohibition notices served: 0.
6.1.9	Closures and Prosecutions	The number of emergency closures was 0 . The number of prosecutions was 0 .
6.2	Identification of any variation from the service plan	1. The number of food hazard warnings received from the Food Standard Agency was nearly 2 times that estimated mainly because of reports about products contaminated with Sudan 1 and 1V which are carcinogens.

<p>6.3 Areas of improvement</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. A third party audit of the inspection process was not carried out by a contractor because the Essex Chief Environmental Health Officers Food Group was unable to produce the audit protocol and procedure, which is necessary to ensure consistency of the process throughout Essex. 3. An audit of RDC's food EHOs was not carried out because of demands of other work. However, an internal audit during October 2003 by RDC's Principal Auditor confirmed that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are effective procedures in respect of the contract arrangements; • There are effective controls in place in respect of compliance with regulations for inspection programmes; • The target of 95% for food inspections was exceeded for 2002/03; • There are effective procedures in place to ensure training of EHOs is kept up to date. 1. The FSAs guidance setting out the requirements for the planning, management and delivery of food safety services needs to be implemented by reviewing and revising existing systems and documenting them, and by creating third party peer review systems to verify its conformance against the Standard. <p><u>Action</u> The review and documentation of the food safety services system to comply with the FSA's standard will be complete by 2006.</p>
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	<p>2. A third party audit of the food service needs to be carried out</p> <p><u>Action</u> A third party audit of the food service will be carried out by a contractor by 2006.</p> <p>3. An audit of RDC food EHOs needs to be carried out in accordance with 5.0 of this plan</p> <p><u>Action.</u> An audit of RDCs food EHOs will be carried out during 2005/06</p>
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PROGRAMMED FOOD HYGIENE INSPECTIONS

1.04.05 TO 31.03.06

<u>Risk Category</u>	<u>Number of Inspections</u>
A	16
B	49
C	133
D	37
E	65