

Sunderland City Council

City Services, (Street Scene)

Public Protection and Regulatory Services

Food Law Enforcement Service Plan
2012/13

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FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICE PLAN 2012/13

1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The Department's aim is to protect the health of all persons within the City in relation to food safety matters.

Our objectives are to proactively interact with food businesses within the City on a risk-based programme to improve the standard of food premises in the City. A variety of interventions are under consideration, with the Food Standards Agency approval, which will influence the actions at each premises during the year and the number of programmed inspections. Alternative strategies to inspection for enforcing standards in lower-risk premises are still being considered regionally with other interventions being considered. We will undertake a programme of food sampling, both microbiological and compositional. We will also respond appropriately to all food complaints, food alerts and food poisoning incidents.

We will also educate and advise the public and the food trade in matters of food hygiene and safety. Officers from the Food team will undertake the inspection of ships visiting the Port in accordance with current guidance.

1.2 Links To Corporate Objectives And Plans

The Sunderland Strategy for the years 2008-2025 sets out the framework for the work of everyone in the council. The full document can be viewed on the council's website. The Environmental Health section, in relation to Food, can impact on all of the five strategic aims to a greater or lesser extent.

They are;

1. To create a strong and diverse local economy that will provide jobs and careers for people in the city now and in the future.
2. To create a city that provides excellent health and social care services, where residents are supported to make healthy life and lifestyle choices.
3. To make Sunderland a place where everyone feels welcome and can be part of a safe and inclusive community.
4. To create a thriving learning culture where everyone can be involved in learning.
5. To ensure that Sunderland becomes a clean, green city with a strong culture of sustainability.

Of the five priorities set to achieve the goals, the Food section will be involved with – Prosperous City, Healthy City, Safe City and Learning City.

The Corporate Improvement Plan

The Food teams are included in the following Corporate Improvement Objectives whilst undertaking their statutory and advisory roles;

- § Delivering Customer Focused Services
- § Being One Council
- § Efficient and Effective Council
- § Improving Partnership Working to deliver One City.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Sunderland City Council covers an area of 138 sq. kilometres and contains a population of about 284,000. It is the largest City between Leeds and Edinburgh. The area is largely urban ("metropolitan") but contains a great diversity of settlements including the City Centre, Washington and former coalmining communities such as Houghton le Spring and Hetton le Hole.

2.2 Organisational Structure

The Council through a Leader, Cabinet and a total of 75 Councillors covering 25 wards, has an annual estimated budget of approximately £253.7 million for 2012/13. The Council employs 12,803 different individuals working full and part time across the City in a wide variety of jobs. The most recent estimate of the number of Council staff (Full Time Equivalents) currently employed is 10,180.35

Current Departmental Structure;

Chief Executive + 4 Directorates; City Services, Children's Services, and Health, Housing and Adult Services, and Office of the Chief Executive.

Structure of City Services

City Services have four main service areas, Street Scene, Culture and Tourism, Customer Services and Community Services.

Street Scene includes the Public Protection and Regulatory Services division as well as Responsive Local Services, City-Wide Services, Highways and Transportation, Network Management, Cemeteries and Crematorium, Drainage, Grounds Maintenance, Refuse Collection and Street Cleaning.

Within Public Protection and Regulatory Services, (Environmental Health Section), the Commercial Food team and Health Promotion team are involved in food related matters and Trading Standards are involved in primary production and feedingstuffs control.

With regard to the line of Management for food matters, the Executive Director of City Services is the Chief Officer and the Assistant Head of Street Scene heads the Public Protection and Regulatory Services division. There is an Environmental Health Manager for Commercial sections and a Principal Environmental Health Officer responsible for food matters. The Assistant Head of Street Scene is also line manager to the Trading Standards and Licensing Manager, and Health Promotion Specialist.

This arrangement may change during 2012 as there is currently a Review of Regulatory Services being conducted.

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

The activities relating to food in the City are undertaken between the Commercial Food team, Trading Standards team and the Health Promotion team.

This arrangement may change during 2012 as there is currently a Review of Regulatory Services being conducted.

The Commercial Food team currently carry out a programme of food hygiene and food standards inspection duties as well as responding to requests for service and infectious disease notifications. Sampling of foodstuffs, both microbiological and compositional, is also undertaken. The team has for many years enforced health and safety at work in most food premises in line with recommendations in the Lord Young report "Common Sense, Common Safety". Officers also respond to Port Health requests and food hygiene inspections are part of the Ship Sanitation Certificates required under International Health Regulations.

Trading Standards Officers within the Department specialise in the primary production and animal feedingstuffs response.

The services of Health Protection Agency laboratories and the Public Analyst, currently complement the work of the two teams. The County Analyst service, Durham no longer exists and possible alternative arrangements are being considered regionally. A NEPO tender document has been prepared and tenders were invited in March for the public analyst service.

The Health Promotion team provide Level 2 (Basic) and Level 3 (Intermediate) Food Hygiene Training Courses. Officers organise campaigns and undertake visits to educational establishments in connection with food hygiene. The Heartbeat award and Healthy Home Award schemes are promoted and managed by the team, with inspections being undertaken of relevant premises. Significant interest in the Healthy Home Award was generated at a second seminar earlier this year and it is anticipated that there will be a further increase in the number of awards presented this year.

The Joint Authorities in the region have previously co-operated with training for new businesses in a partnership arrangement between the Authorities and funded by the participants. We will continue to seek and cooperate in joint working between the Authorities.

The food service currently operates from Jack Crawford House. The Contact Centre in Fawcett Street is open to the public in normal working hours throughout the week, 8.30am to 5.15pm (4.45pm Friday), although officers from the Food Team may be contacted by businesses directly. There is an evening and weekend service arrangement for contacting management for out-of-hours emergencies. There are

no formal planned “out of hours” arrangements for field Officers, however visits are conducted at events or as necessary outside normal working hours.

The Council website www.sunderland.gov.uk encourages the public to communicate with the Department by email and makes information constantly available. Letters from the Department to customers / companies encourage the use of email. The facility to contact the Department and individual Officers by direct telephone lines is also promoted with customers. Initial contact for services to the public is now through the Customer Services Network.

The Council displays current food hygiene ratings on the sunderlandcitycouncil.com website, which is also linked from the sunderland.gov.uk website (Food Hygiene). This Authority also regularly updates data on the Food Standards Agency national scheme and the system is operating successfully. Ratings can be found on <http://ratings.food.gov.uk>

The Authority has a limited rural community, principally arable with few livestock holdings. The Trading Standards Division carries out the enforcement of primary production and feedingstuffs legislation and advice to farmers / retailers.

2.4 Demands on the food service

- There are 2152 food premises currently operating in the City, including 1 registered Primary Producer.

Food Premises in the City of which;	No.	Food Hygiene High Risk (a)	Food Hygiene Medium Risk (b)	Food Hygiene Medium Risk (c)	Food Hygiene Medium Risk (d)	Food Hygiene Low risk (e)	Unrated / unclassified
Primary producers / manufacturers / processors	93	0	9	42	10	19	13
Packers / Importers / Exporters / distributors, etc	38	0	1	2	13	20	2
Retailers	556	0	15	170	194	142	19
Restaurant / Other Caterers	1465	1	155	821	199	194	94
Contact Materials and articles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Food Premises	2152	1	180	1035	416	375	128
Outside the programme	17						

- The majority are classified in the Restaurant / catering outlet group (1465) whilst there are 557 food retailers.
- The unrated / unclassified premises are those which have recently opened or changed proprietor since the last inspection. These premises are revisited for further inspection and a further rating within 6 months to make an informed judgement of on-going standards.
- The Stadium of Light can accommodate over 40,000 seated spectators, with significant catering from the outlets within the stadium. International events are also hosted at the site. This year several major music events again are planned in May / June at the Stadium that will involve the food team.
- There are a significant number of outdoor events held regularly each year (e.g. Air Show, International Friendship Festival) which are attended by up to 1.5 million visitors, with various mobile caterers and food businesses from around the region and beyond visiting the Authority to cater at the events.
- Port health inspections which require inspections of food hygiene and standards on board vessels coming into the port were undertaken. The provision of Ship Sanitation Certificates has continued to be requested from the Authority.
- Increased vigilance continues to be expected regarding the inland enforcement of imported food legislation in an effort to prevent the spread of disease in food animals.
- The Freedom of Information Act can impact on the workload of the Department due to the administration of requests and time spent recovering the information. Press and other enquiries to Local Authorities in the region continue to request specific information regarding comparative businesses in each Local Authority. In the past year, again there have been 7 formal requests for information regarding food premises in the financial year 2011 to April 2012.
- Information regarding local food premises is available on-line i.e. Food Hygiene Rating Scheme from our own council website. This involves the publication of a food safety rating for catering premises in the City based on standards of structure and hygiene ratings and confidence in management scores assessed during programmed inspections. Following inspections, the written communications to business owners advise them that the information may be released on the website in the future and in response to third party requests as required by Freedom of Information legislation. The Food Standards Agency national scheme is operating and this Authority is part of the national scheme.
- The Licensing function impacts on the workload. Officers consider new licences and applications for amendments to licences as part of the Responsible Authority consultation.

- There is some potential for any large outbreak of food poisoning or illness, or a serious accident at food premises, to impact significantly on the routine service operated by the Authority.
- There are no other likely major impacts e.g. significant food imports, seasonal variations or high numbers of food manufacturing businesses other than local catering businesses. Where food alerts necessitate a significant response, this will impact on other areas of the service.
- Food alerts are notified by the Food Standards Agency to Local Authorities. During 2011 there were 28 alerts with 2 updates. In the first three months of 2012 a further 8 alerts were received with 1 update. (Many of these alerts have been product recalls where response from this Authority has been minimized). The alerts have included; possible hazards associated with the contamination of kettle chips and turkey goujons with plastic, food produced on premises without the required approval, glass fragments in bottled beer, soft drinks, snack products and pies, metal in pizzas and ready meals, salmonella in bean sprouts, listeria in milkshakes, and contamination of Indian cheese with veterinary medicines. Details of all the food alerts are available on the Food Standards Agency (FSA) website, www.food.gov.uk.
- The FSA system of allergy alerts, separate from food alerts, continues with many instances of food labelling errors or contamination of specific ingredients. There were 42 such alerts in 2011 and 21 have been received in the first quarter of this year. Whilst not critical to the general public health they can have serious effects on persons who are allergic to specific ingredients.

2.5 Enforcement Policy

The Department has a documented Enforcement Policy, which has due regard to the Tyne and Wear Food Enforcement Policy. The Authority works in accordance with the principles of the Regulators' Compliance Code, and a review is planned for this year.

The Code of Practice requires that any breaches of food law that may be detected in premises where the Authority is itself the proprietor of a food business should be brought to the attention of the Chief Executive, without undue delay. There have been no instances in the past year where such action was necessary.

3. SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Food Control

3.1.1 Food Premises Inspections

Officers routinely inspect high risk premises on a risk based basis. This year there is to be continued emphasis on targeting non-compliant businesses. It is envisaged that those premises which are found not to be complying as indicated by poor

structures, poor hygiene standards or where there is low confidence in management, will progress into a monitored scheme to require improvements.

The National Performance Indicator (ni 184) set previously for the percentage of food businesses that are broadly compliant has been withdrawn, although Local Authorities will continue to send relevant data annually to the FSA, from which the Performance Indicator can be calculated. A local new Performance indicator has recently been set up and quarterly performance reports are produced. Information on premises that are not broadly compliant is available to the public as it is indicated on the Hygiene Rating information on the web. Businesses with a rating of less than 3 are not broadly compliant.

There will still be risk rating for all premises inspected and the Food Standards Agency still anticipate the frequency of inspections for high risk premises being governed by the rating.

Whilst it has been the Department's ongoing annual target to inspect all food premises at a risk rated frequency in accordance with previous guidance from the Code of Practice, the FSA are encouraging Authorities to spend more time at targeted businesses rather than spread over the whole range in future, in accordance with Governmental policy. The lowest rated premises are subject to programmes of alternative enforcement strategies. Premises subject to alternative enforcement have been sent letters and questionnaires requiring a response. Failure to respond, or unsatisfactory responses received will necessitate a visit by an Officer. Any complaints or where intelligence raises issues will result in a visit to the premises by an Officer. This scheme has been agreed to promote consistency and uniformity for businesses and Authorities across the region. Highest risk premises which require specific approval will receive interventions as required. They will be subjected to risk rating and intervention frequency will be determined on an individual basis. Last year 36 premises were dealt with by an alternative strategy – 46 letters were sent (a reminder was sent to 10 businesses), 28 were returned and 4 were subsequently inspected.

The Department has again achieved high rates on inspection of food premises and in 2011/12 visited 1329 different food premises and undertook 1408 inspections. A total of 1895 visits were made including inspections, revisits and sampling. Only 3 inspections were outstanding at the year end. These were completed early in April 2012.

The estimated number of inspections programmed for the year 2012/13 at the time of preparation of this report is approximately 1302 plus any new businesses commencing within the year. Alternative strategies for lower risk premises will determine a change in priority resulting in fewer premises being visited but potentially more visits being made to non-compliant premises to promote and confirm improved standards.

We aim generally to inspect the premises within one month of the due date for inspection, the only exceptions being those businesses that operate seasonally and those which may be subject to alternative enforcement strategies.

Secondary inspections (including revisits) to premises are carried out as necessary in order to ensure that material defects are rectified. Those premises which are not broadly compliant will be followed up with a view to enforcing compliant standards.

The Department has participated in a Business Transformation Programme (BTP) giving consideration to computer systems that are more sustainable. Existing in-house systems continue to work satisfactorily for the Commercial Teams whilst awaiting any change.

3.1.2 Food Complaints

The Authority is committed to responding to all food complaints, the extent of the investigation depending on the merits of the complaint. This can range from re-assuring the complainant to the more formal process, including reference to home or originating Authorities in accordance with the guidance and the relevant Code of Practice. Officers also refer to any Primary Authority, a scheme promoted by legislation and the Better Regulation Office.

In 2011/12, 356 requests for service requiring a response from Officers on the Food Team were made, including 81 complaints relating to food standards or labelling, and 27 requests relating to suspected food poisoning. The staff resources required to deal with these requests were drawn from the Commercial Food team. It is estimated that the time expended on food complaints in 2012/13 will be equivalent to 0.25 officers (full time equivalent).

3.2 Primary Producers and Feedingstuffs Control

3.2.1 Premises Inspection

The Trading Standards Section of the Department has the delegated duty to enforce legislation in relation to primary production and feedingstuffs control. Inspection and sampling of products at farms, manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers is undertaken on a risk-assessed basis. As part of the animal health visits, feedingstuffs inspections are undertaken. Previous inspections have not revealed any premises using imported feed products. Ongoing dialogue with the Port of Sunderland may produce some activity if any feed is imported.

3.2.2 Feedingstuffs Complaints

Due to the relatively few number of feedingstuffs establishments, it is not anticipated that there will not be a significant number of complaints received by the Authority. Any complaints will be investigated in line with Departmental procedures. The Authority last year received no complaints which related to feedingstuffs. The most likely source of complaints will relate to pet foods.

3.2.3 Home Authority Business Advice

There are no businesses in Sunderland that manufacture or import feedingstuffs. The Port of Sunderland may at some point in time become a storage place and

distribution hub for imported feed. If this occurs it can be managed from existing resources by means of prioritisation. It is currently believed that no other type of feed business would warrant a Home or Primary Authority relationship.

3.2.4 Business Advice

With so few premises within the area and no history of previous requests for business advice in relation to feed it is not anticipated that there will be any business enquiries in relation to feed.

3.2.5 Sampling Programme

Sampling will take place where a complaint justifies a sample be taken, though there is no expectation of any complaints. Samples may be taken to assist in project instituted by the Food Standards Agency or the North East Trading Standards Association or to maintain competence levels.

3.2.6 Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

Previous history has shown no resource requirement for the control and investigation of outbreaks and food related infectious disease in relation to feed. If this were to occur, resources from other Sections would be utilised as necessary.

3.3 Primary Authority Scheme

This was introduced by legislation governed by the Better Regulation office whereby businesses operating in more than one Local Authority area can choose to partner individual Authorities in connection with a selection of regulatory elements.

The future local impact of food safety enforcement is still difficult to assess, however this Authority will comply with all legal requirements in the enforcement of legislation under this principle.

Another similar scheme called "Home Authority Principle" also continues to operate with some businesses.

3.4 Advice to Business

The Authority seeks to assist local businesses as part of the City / Community Strategy. Last year 87 specific requests for advice were logged by the Food Team. Advice is given informally at every visit to food premises by the Officers, as appropriate.

The Authority is committed to promote the Food Standards Agency (FSA) project "Safer Food, Better Business", (SFBB) which is aligned to supporting certain food businesses in complying with the food safety management principles. There will continue to be great efforts to educate businesses in complying with the requirement for them to have implemented a suitable food safety management system, which some smaller food businesses seem to find difficult

In correspondence to food businesses, a standard invitation is given to them to seek advice from the Department.

Larger manufacturing businesses and small–medium enterprises have both expressed their approval of the department's dealings with their business and readiness to assist with advice, a policy of the Department for many years.

In routine inspections and visits to businesses, Officers pay special attention to advising and explaining matters appropriate to the situation.

Close links are maintained with many business organisations in the City and informal agreement reached to cooperate more fully with businesses through these contacts.

3.5 Food Inspection and Sampling

The Department is committed to sampling foods for compositional standards, bacteriological standards and food standards compliance. Sampling is undertaken proactively involving imported and locally produced foods, as well as participating in national and regional surveys with Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) and Health Protection Agency Laboratory Service.

The Department undertakes local sampling surveys from its own intelligence and from liaison with the Health Protection Agency and other Local Authorities in the region.

As a consequence of "demand" i.e. complaints, food alerts, food poisoning outbreaks, etc. further samples will be taken. Last year 381 samples were taken.

An estimated 500 samples will be taken for bacteriological examination / compositional analysis in the year 2012/13, including 30 water samples. As a consequence of new legislation, private water supplies and distribution systems may require some sampling and work to identify such systems is on going.

The HPA Laboratory transports samples from the region up to daily as necessary by courier to Leeds. Close liaison exists with the laboratories management and neighbouring Authorities to ensure the most effective and coordinated programme with flexibility for local peculiarities.

Participation with neighbouring Authorities in sampling and other food related matters ensures that the Authority works in a co-ordinated and compatible way.-

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

This authority has agreed with the regional Health Protection Unit a policy for considering the investigation of confirmed food poisoning cases. Most cases other than suspected viral infections and Campylobacter cases receive contact to endeavour to trace the source and prevent further spread. These are usually

undertaken during personal visits from an Environmental Health Officer. Campylobacter cases are contacted by letter (see below).

The Department, with the Health Protection Agency, operates under the updated “Guidelines – Preventing person-to-person spread following gastrointestinal infections”

A local Consultant for Communicable Disease Control is employed by the Health Protection Agency. Dr. Tricia Cresswell is available to the Department for any advice regarding specific problems relating to infectious disease.

It is vital that any food worker suffering from symptoms of food poisoning advise their employers. Ceasing to work with food until symptom free for at least 48 hours is a common requirement but advice should be sought for specific illnesses.

Advice on food poisoning is available on the Sunderland.gov.uk website by inserting “food poisoning” in the search box on the home page (top right) and following the links.

The number of reported cases of food poisoning depends on persons suffering attending their GP or hospital, where, if samples are taken, and found to be positive, the medical practitioner has a legal duty to inform the Authority. There are close liaisons between the laboratories, Health Protection Agency and the Department to follow up all positive cases.

The Department has maintained close links with the Health Protection Agency as a partner in tackling ill health. Regular meetings to discuss various matters relating to food poisoning cases and sampling programmes take place. The Public Analyst and Health Protection Agency are contracted to assist with expertise where any additional problems arise. Networks exist within the region, nationally and with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Food Hygiene Forum.

Statistics of cases notified over recent years

Year to March 31 st	Campylobacter	Salmonella	Cryptosporidia	Food poisoning & suspected FP	Shigella	Esch. Coli	Other miscellaneous organisms	Totals
2008	292	53	28	13	1	3	6	396
2009	306	58	26	24	5	2	2	423
2010	357	52	38	12	4	4	4	471
2011	440	28	27	11	3	2	0	511
2012	286	38	17	6	2	12	2	363

Year to March 31st	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Totals
2008	19	33	42	46	58	44	39	40	19	13	18	25	396
2009	19	35	50	48	48	41	50	36	22	20	28	26	423
2010	28	38	66	44	40	56	56	41	24	21	24	33	471
2011	37	28	57	90	58	47	57	46	23	21	23	24	511
2012	26	43	30	39	47	32	33	27	24	24	26	12	363

The Authority is committed to a response to all cases and outbreaks notified. The scale of the investigation and response will be measured and as appropriate to the causative organism and potential for further spread. Many cases appear to be the result of foreign travel or home acquired, and some infections e.g. Cryptosporidiosis and Campylobacter may be acquired from the environment rather than from a food source within the City.

As in previous years, the Norovirus (“Winter Vomiting disease”) continued to affect many residential establishments in the City and regionally.

This infection is commonly spread environmentally from person to person rather than being food-borne. Officers work closely with the Health Protection Agency to limit the spread of this infection environmentally and ensure an appropriate response is made, commensurate with the necessity to identify the infection and limit the impact.

Notifications of Campylobacter infections continue to be prominent throughout the country, and the investigation of cases in the past has been time consuming with little chance of identifying the definite sources. Campylobacter is present in the environment and may be picked up outdoors. It is also present in raw chicken and efforts to educate the public regarding risks of cross contamination in the home are being pursued. Unlike most Salmonella strains, it can take relatively few Campylobacter organisms to cause illness. The HPA have worked with EHOs regionally regarding investigations and a policy has been adopted by Local Authorities and the HPA regionally which has reduced the workload created by investigating the increasing number of Campylobacter notifications. Every case notified to the Authority has been contacted by advisory letter rather than visits by an Environmental Health Officer.

Food Safety Week 11-17 June 2012 theme is ‘Food Safety on a Budget’, advising how people can ensure that they keep their food safe when trying to save money.

3.7 Food Safety Incidents

The Authority is committed to responding appropriately to all Food Alerts issued by the Food Standards Agency in accordance with the Code of Practice on this subject. The level of response is determined by the category of response required and individual circumstances of the incident / local impact. Information is available to the

public through Press releases and a link on the Council website to the Food Standards Agency.

3.8 Liaising with other organisations

The Authority meets with the six other Authorities – Tyne & Wear plus Durham and Northumberland, in a North East Food Liaison Group, which operates particularly successfully with close cooperation between the representatives. There are also Sampling sub-groups, and the South of Tyne meeting between the Health Protection Agency, Local Authorities, and P.C.T., which includes representatives from the relevant bacteriological laboratories and Communicable disease specialists.

Trading Standards Officers meet frequently at North East Trading Standards Association (NETSA) meetings when any topical subjects can be considered.

Relevant Building Control and Planning Applications are referred to the Department for consideration and comment.

There is frequent liaison with other Departments and sections in connection with food matters, including Facilities Management (City Catering), School Meals, Procurement, Housing, Health and Adult Services, and also regarding premises licences.

The section has positive liaison with the local office of the Health Protection Agency, Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust, City Hospitals Sunderland, local food federations and guilds.

3.9 Food Safety and Standards Promotion

Whilst Officers give advice and information in the course of inspections and other visits, the Health Promotion Team offer training for the Level 2 Award Food Hygiene, the Level 3 Intermediate Certificate in Food Safety and Level 1 Foundation Certificate in Nutrition. The Team also undertake campaigns during the year.

It is anticipated that we will continue to promote a “Curry Chef of the Year” competition which will require, as part of the terms of entry, consideration of the standards of hygiene of the businesses involved. A joint final was held with 3 other Authorities in 2011. More local authorities in the region hope to have representatives in the final this year.

The Heartbeat Award has been running in Sunderland since 1990 and the Healthy Home award commenced in this Authority in 1997. Each of these award schemes has food hygiene related elements. A total of 138 Heart of Sunderland awards and 27 Healthy Home awards were given in 2011/12.

During 2011/12:-

- § 5 Food Hygiene Refresher Training Courses were held for 80 delegates.
- § 19 courses were held in Level 2 Award Food Hygiene attended by 205

§ delegates.

§ 8 delegates attended Level 3 Intermediate Certificate training.

Basic food hygiene information for consumers is available on the Council Website. Similarly advice is also available on food poisoning organisms and what to do in the event of suspecting that you are ill from consuming contaminated food.

This year the Heartbeat award was replaced with a new award, the Heart of Sunderland award.

The award recognises and rewards businesses that offer healthy food options, promotes healthy eating and makes it easier for customers to make an informed choice on foods they buy.

There are 3 award categories:

Bronze awarded to premises which make food healthier by reducing fat, salt and sugar content but may have a limited menu

Silver awarded to premises which are committed to improving the nutritional quality of the food and help customers make informed choices.

Gold awarded to premises which can demonstrate a healthy eating policy with nutritionally trained staff.

In addition, all award premises must demonstrate good standards of hygiene with a food hygiene rating of 3 or above.

A no smoking policy must be in place with support given to staff wishing to quit and information displayed on counterfeit cigarettes.

A total of 138 premises received the awards;

55 Gold

75 Silver

8 Bronze

Healthy Home awards were presented to 27 nursing and residential homes across the City.

A seminar was held in February 2012 which was well attended by home managers. Information and presentations were delivered on relevant subjects associated with the award. (From 2012 the Healthy Home award forms part of the Adult Health and Housing services quality rating system).

The awards are presented to homes which have a food hygiene rating of 3 or above, balanced menus, health and safety policies and procedures in place, together with a number of care issues for the service users.

The Curry chef competition took place locally and regionally with 4 chefs competing in the regional final. 2011 saw a nutritional element being included in the competition.

4. RESOURCES

4.1 Financial Allocation

For 2012-13 the budget for Food Control (CC0120) is £478,667 of which £282,282 is delegated (i.e. controlled by the budget manager).

Health Promotion (CC0131) has a general budget of £56,504 (of which £27,699 is delegated) including anticipated income of £24,275 partly from food hygiene training.

The Feedstuffs element of the Trading Standards budget relating to Inspection, Training and Business Advice is estimated to be £2,500, equating to approximately 111 officer hours (Grade POF/G) per annum.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

Staffing resources will possibly change as a consequence of Regulatory Review. Staff allocated to Food work in 2011/12 were as follows;

Food Team

- 1 Principal Environmental Health Officer / Team Leader (Full Time)
- 3 Senior Environmental Health Officers (2.9 FTE)
- 1 Environmental Health Officer
- 1 Technical Officer (Full time – working towards Higher Certificate)

All of the full-time Senior Environmental Health Officers currently employed have over 2 years experience in food matters. The EHO is progressing very well and continues to gain valuable experience.

Health Promotion

- 1 Health Promotion Specialist (Part time on food matters)
- 1 Health Promotion Assistant (Part time on food matters)

Trading Standards

- 3 Trading Standards Officer (Part time fertiliser and feedingstuffs)
- 3 Trading Standards Officer (Part time Primary Producers)

Estimated Total Full-time equivalent for all Food and Feedstuffs activity = 7.075 Officers on the establishment.

Last year the Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing Teams were moved to the Depot building at Jack Crawford House. Administration Support was redeployed in Support Services (SSS) and initial customer contact was undertaken by the Customer Contact Network. All three significant changes have been undertaken satisfactorily with the cooperation of management and staff embracing the Sunderland Way of Working.

4.3 Staff Development Plan

Staff Appraisals are undertaken regularly and the findings are included in staff development and training plans. Cooperation regionally through the Food Liaison Group and the assistance of the Food Standards Agency in providing low cost training is acknowledged.

Individuals are sent to specific training where appropriate and all Environmental Health Officers are required to maintain a training log in order to comply with Continuing Professional Development.

Training days and training sessions on subjects are programmed as necessary.

Any members of staff "new" to food tasks will need to be supervised and receive training commensurate with the Code of Practice.

5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Monitored inspections will be recorded within the food premises database during this year.

The necessary arrangements were made, with assistance from the IT section, for the new annual return of statistics for 2009/10 (LAEMS – Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System). The 2011/12 return is well on schedule to be provided to the Food Standards Agency by the required internet method, as required before the deadline of 1st June 2012. The return gives specific detailed information about every food business in the City rather than collated statistics as required in the past.

6. REVIEW / PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

6.1 Review against Service Plan

A review against the service plan is undertaken mid-year with consideration of achievements against targets. In the interim periods, line management monitors progress, including utilising the very effective in-house database software. The anticipated change to commercial software for sustainability reasons has not been achieved due to the financial cost of the software.

Monthly targets are set for each officer and officers are expected to achieve the required inspection rate to reach annual service level targets.

The Corporate Improvement Plan and an Annual Report is produced to define achievements made during the previous year.

The Service Plan and Annual Report are submitted to the Chief Executive for consideration by the Council as part of the Director's Performance Agreement.

6.2 Identification of any variance from the Service Plan

The food control team performed extremely well against the Service Plan for 2011 / 2012 in all areas of Service Delivery.

The comprehensive review of procedure and policy documents is on-going.

6.3 Improvements Achieved

- Implement the Food Hygiene Star Rating Award system on the FSA website (Target launch 28 June 2011). Achieved
- Continue to implement alternative enforcement strategy for low risk businesses with LAs in the region. Achieved
- Contribute fully to regional training and support all peer review, Inter Authority Audit and / or internal monitoring exercises between LAs in the region. Achieved
- Continue to promote the use of Safer Food Better Business (SFBB), a food safety management scheme, to appropriate food businesses in the City during visits by Officers and within training programmes. Achieved
- Continue to support the Healthy Home Award to raise standards in that sector. Achieved

6.4 Areas for Improvement

- Continue to implement the requirements / guidance of the Local Better Regulation Office in relation to the Regulatory Reform Act. Ongoing
- Progress any necessary actions as a result of future determination of the BTP re departmental computer software. No actions determined.

Due to the regulatory Review, this year may see significant changes to the structure of the section and process for accomplishing the food safety responsibility, which at this stage are difficult to forecast

END

