



# Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2012 - 2014

Food Safety

Inspection Services

Advice & Help

Disease Control

Education

Partnership with Business

Liaison

Effective Delivery

Quality

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## FOREWORD

Lichfield District is a growing centre of culture and heritage. Together with its relatively affluent resident population, the tourism industry has led to the development of a thriving and vibrant day and night time economy which is supported by over 850 food businesses including some of Staffordshire's finest and award winning eateries.

Whether it is a lunchtime sandwich, three course meal or food which is produced in the area, we want to ensure that all food available to the residents, employees, visitors and the wider public is safe and healthy. Our role is to help food businesses deliver products which are safe and are produced from premises which are hygienic and properly controlled, thereby allowing the business to grow and thrive. It is also to provide information to the public to help them make informed choices about what and where to eat, through education and promotion.

This year we have produced a Plan setting out our Food Service Delivery priorities for the coming 2 years, as we envisage radical change in the way food controls are delivered both locally and nationally by the end of this period. This Plan is developed in order to meet the requirements of the 'Food Standard Agency's Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement' and covers, in detail:

- ❖ the aims and key priorities of the services provided
- ❖ the organisational structure and the scope of the services provided
- ❖ the ways in which the service will be delivered and the targets for its delivery
- ❖ the human and financial resources involved in providing the service
- ❖ the ways in which the quality of the service will be monitored and improved upon
- ❖ the ways in which the service will be reviewed and improved upon

The Food Safety Service Delivery Plan will next be reviewed in spring 2014. However, before then the Council would welcome not only feedback on the current Service Plan, but also suggestions from interested parties on what they feel should be included in future plans.

Copies of this Service Plan will be available on our website [www.lichfielddc.gov.uk](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk)

Comments, observations and any suggestions for improvement should be sent for the attention of Graham Hakes, Community, Housing and Health, Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 6YX, or by e-mailing him at [graham.hakes@lichfielddc.gov.uk](mailto:graham.hakes@lichfielddc.gov.uk)

Councillor Ian Pritchard  
Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Environmental Protection  
November 2012

**LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**FOOD SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2012-14**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Council recognises the important role it plays in securing the safety of food consumed in the District. This plan's key focus is to demonstrate how the Council will fulfil its statutory obligations and duties in relation to food safety.

The stated aim of the Food Standards Agency is to ensure that food law enforcement is undertaken by the various agencies in a more effective, comprehensive and collaborative manner. This Food Safety Service Plan sets out to achieve these objectives.

Underpinning our Food Safety Service is the ethos on ensuring we are delivering services to all communities equitably, proportionally and consistently, taking account the personal beliefs, race, age, disability, gender and sexuality of all our customers.

## SECTION 1: SERVICE AIMS & KEY PRIORITIES

### 1.1 SERVICE AIMS

To contribute to the Lichfield District Council's corporate commitment to **'help deliver enhanced quality of life for people who live in, work and visit our district, which relies on improved economic, social and environmental well-being across the district'** by protecting and improving the public health of those living in our community in connection with the consumption of food and likewise to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food.

1. To provide a food service in Lichfield District, to the public and businesses alike, that is **equitable, proportional, consistent, helpful, open and takes into account equality issues.**

2. To actively contribute to the **Food Standards Agency's Strategy for 2011-2015** and its key strategic objective to ensure **safer food for the nation**. To achieve this the Food Standards Agency with its partners e.g. local authorities wants to concentrate on six key outcomes:-

1. foods produced or sold in the UK are safe to eat.

2. imported food is safe to eat

3. food producers and caterers give priority to consumer interests in relation to food

4. consumers have the information and understanding they need to make informed choices about where and what they eat

5. regulation is effective, risk-based and proportionate, is clear about the responsibilities of food business operators, and protects consumers and their interests from fraud and other risks

6. enforcement is effective, consistent, risk-based and proportionate and is focused on improving public health

3. The underpinning outcome for us as a Local Authority Food Service is that of **effective regulation**. To achieve this we aim to follow the headline priorities for regulation laid out by the Food Standard Agency:-

➤ secure effective enforcement and implementation of policies that protect consumers from risks related to food and from fraudulent or misleading practices, targeting the areas where there is highest risk.

➤ develop our knowledge of what works in driving up business compliance with regulations.

➤ safeguard consumers by making it easier for business to comply with regulations, and minimise burdens on business.

➤ secure more proportionate, risk-based and effective regulation.

### 1.2 KEY PRIORITIES

1.2.1 In order to achieve our stated service aims, we need to set out some key priorities for our Food Safety Service Delivery. These key priorities are:-

- To ensure that interventions are carried out commensurate with the principles of risk, at food premises within the district, to help them comply with the relevant food laws.
- To ensure as far as reasonably practicable, that imported food used or sold in premises within the District complies with UK and European Food Law.
- To ensure as far as reasonably practicable, that no illegally produced food is used or sold in premises within the District e.g. meat or meat products from unauthorised plants.
- To ensure food complaints are investigated.
- To develop partnerships with small local businesses and larger national companies based in our district, which will help to provide consistent and proportional advice on food safety issues at both local and national levels (Primary Authorities).
- To undertake a food sampling regime based on local and national priorities.
- To provide informed and helpful advice to businesses and the public alike on matters relating to food safety.
- To act on food safety alerts promptly and in a manner that is proportionate to the risks involved.
- To play an active role with neighbouring local authorities in the Staffordshire Chief Environmental Health Officers Food Liaison Group in order to ensure a consistent approach to food law enforcement.
- To develop innovative ways of delivering education programmes on issues relating to food safety.
- To play a key role in developing innovative ways that enable, motivate, educate and inform all citizens of matters relating to food safety.
- To provide help, advice and support to consumers to protect health and promote healthier lifestyles and consumer choice.
- To review the way we deliver our food service annually that takes into account recognised performance targets and standards.

### 1.3 LINKS TO CORPORATE OBJECTIVES & PLANS

- 1.3.1 This Food Safety Service Delivery Plan links closely with the strategic themes laid out in **A Plan for Lichfield District 2012-2016**. These essentially govern how the Council in future will deliver its services based on local aspirations, needs and priorities.

At the heart of the **Plan** is the Council's commitment to **'help deliver enhanced quality of life for people who live in, work and visit our district, which relies on improved economic, social and environmental well-being across the district.'**

This means that 'sustainable development' needs to be at the heart of everything we do.

- 1.3.2 To help deliver this objective the Council has identified 3 key **'Themes'** all which are interlinked and built on a **foundation** which is 'a desire to be a good council that provides the community leadership and delivers value for money services that people want. This aim will be performance assessed and measured alongside our achievements under our key **Themes**.'

Our 3 key **'Themes'**:-

- ✓ **We'll support local people**... to ensure our district is a place where everyone shares in an improved quality of life and community well-being.
- ✓ **We'll shape local places**... to ensure our district is a place where people love to live, work and visit, with a high quality residential, community and commercial environment.
- ✓ **We'll boost the local economy**... to ensure our district is a place where businesses and enterprise can flourish, and there is a vibrant economy.

Underpinning these 'Themes' is the principle of **partnerships with the community, business, voluntary organisations and government agencies**.

Different elements of our Food Safety Service make vital contributions to these key **'Themes'**.

- 1.3.3 Our Food Safety Service Delivery Plan will contribute to the **theme** of **'supporting local people'** by:-

- ensuring we are delivering services to all communities equitably, proportionally and consistently, taking account the personal beliefs, race, age disability, gender and sexuality of all our customers.
- providing help, advice and support to consumers to protect health and promote healthier lifestyles and consumer choice e.g. (Ratemyplace; National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme; Health Promotion in schools).
- providing transparent, robust and consistent approaches to investigating and resolving consumer complaints about food and food businesses

Our Food Safety Service Delivery Plan will contribute to the **themes** of **'shaping local place and boosting the local economy'** by:-

- identifying the need to ensure a consistent, proportionate and fair approach to enforcement is carried out across the District;
- providing appropriate, targeted, specific, transparent and robust advice, support and incentives to businesses such a home authority/ primary authority principles;
- pro-actively providing support and taking targeted, proportionate risk based enforcement action, including inspections ; and
- supporting major businesses in the district through Primary Authority arrangements to ensure they get assured and consistent advice on regulatory compliance.
- actively participating in initiatives on regulatory reform as part of the Greater Birmingham Local Enterprise Partnership and its regulatory pilot.

Our Food Safety Service Delivery Plan will be built on the **foundation** underpinning these **themes** of **‘measuring and performance monitoring our achievements around our key themes’** by:-

- identifying what we currently are delivering in our Food Safety Service;
- setting out what we want to do between 2012-2014 in a work programme based on government and local agendas; and
- highlighting an improvement plan to make our Food Safety Service better, within given timescales which we can be measured against.

1.3.4 The recent changes to public health have created a fantastic opportunity to change the way Services are commissioned and delivered in the future and to place greater emphasis on and investment in the underlying determinants of health.

In support of the Local Strategic Partnership, we have contributed to the production of the **Enhanced Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** for Lichfield District which provides a profile of the wider determinants of health and their local impact. Through this mechanism, we have identified several messages to commissioners including the important role of environmental health officers as public health practitioners. The Assessment will inform the next **Health and Wellbeing Strategy** for Staffordshire and will influence our own local partnership plans and where future funding should be spent.

By helping us to listen to local people and businesses’ aspirations, influences will be drawn which will help shape some our key priorities for our Food Safety Service in the future.

1.3.5 Our Food Safety Service is committed to supporting the priorities outlined in the **Sustainable Community Strategy for Staffordshire**, particularly in relation to diet in young people and qualifications.

1.3.6 Performance of our service is measured against national and local targets such as:-



- Satisfaction of businesses with local authority regulation services.
- Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law.
- % of premises inspected of those due.
- % improvement in 0,1and 2 hygiene rated premises by category year on year.

The indicators provide an objective measure on how our premises are improving and what businesses think of our service.

## **SECTION 2: BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 District Profile**

- 2.1.1 Lichfield District is one of 9 Staffordshire District Councils. Within commuting distance of both the Black Country Boroughs and Birmingham, the District has a population of circa 98,000, and covers nearly 128 square miles. The Council's net budget requirement for 2012-2013 is £10.35m.

The District was formed in 1974, and comprises urban populations in the town of Burntwood and the city of Lichfield, and a substantial rural population in surrounding villages, some of which have significant populations.

- 2.1.2 We have nationally and internationally renowned visitor attractions and the historic environment of Lichfield City provides a strong base for tourism.

The increased income tourism has brought to the District has led to a proportionate increase in the number of food outlets. Our Food Safety Service needs to ensure that these and all our premises provide food safely.

- 2.1.3 About 3.5% of our residents originate from other countries throughout the world, providing a rich and diverse cultural mix. The largest minority ethnic group is the Indian community and there are also established Bangladeshi, Chinese, African Caribbean and Eastern European communities.

The challenge for our Food Safety Service is to ensure that we are delivering services to all communities equitably, proportionally and consistently, taking into account the personal beliefs, race, age, disability, gender and sexuality of all our customers.

- 2.1.4 Although Lichfield District is relatively prosperous, there are communities within the District that do not share in the opportunities and affluence prosperity brings. Some wards within the District are classed as deprived in terms of income, education and skills. Some of our more rural wards have poor access to services such as food shops and health centres.

The challenge for our Food Safety Service is to ensure we encourage fair and equal opportunities to all communities by:-

- providing low cost food hygiene courses and targeted health promotion activities.
- providing support to those who find it difficult to accessing or understanding our services e.g. training provision in other languages.
- giving support in maintaining existing businesses and help in the establishment of new food businesses;

- 2.1.5 In relation to the health of our residents, compared to the 'best' local authorities life expectancy is slightly shorter than the average and death from heart disease and stroke is higher than the national average. The target areas identified for health improvement are tackling the major killers – coronary heart disease and cancer.

The way our Food Safety Service delivers its health awareness campaigns will provide an important influence on the overall improvement of these targets particularly in relation to diet and access to food.

## 2.2 Organisational Structure

- 2.2.1 The Community, Housing & Health Directorate has a wide range of duties covering the spectrum of public health, environmental and housing functions. The Council's Food Safety Service is delivered by the Commercial Team within the Environmental Health Service. The structure of the team is detailed in **Appendix 1**
- 2.2.2 The Strategic Director for Community, Housing & Health has delegated powers in relation to food safety to act on behalf of the Council.
- 2.2.3 In response to the 'modernising agenda' the Council has adopted the 'cabinet and leader' approach to local governance. The committee structure and where our food safety service fits into this is detailed in **Appendix 2**
- 2.2.4 The Regulatory & Licensing Committee have responsibility for policy, review and development in respect of a wide range of environmental health issues including food safety. Performance against this Plan will be reported to this Committee at the end of every financial year.
- 2.2.5 Officers who deliver our Food Safety Service are multi-skilled and work across all the team's work areas at a level depending upon their competence and qualification. The officers with key responsibility for the service are:
- **Environmental Health Manager** – service development; overall management of the service
  - **Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Team)** – day to day management of the service; service development; official returns; food safety database management; product specific premises inspection; high risk premises inspection; service requests; food sampling
  - **Casual Environmental Health Officer** – high and low risk premises inspection when needed
  - **Technical Officer** – service development; high risk premises inspection; food alerts; service requests; food safety data base management; food sampling
  - **Technical Officer** – service development; high risk premises inspection; product specific premises inspection; service requests; food sampling; food complaints
  - **Technical Assistant**– low risk premises inspection; infectious disease notifications; food complaints food safety training & education; food sampling
- 2.2.6 The Council uses both Staffordshire County Council Scientific Services based at Stafford and the West Midlands Food, Water & Environmental Services

based at Good Hope Hospital, Sutton Coldfield, as its public analysts and food examiners (**see Appendix 3 Useful Contacts**)

2.2.7 In relation to Food Standards Law Enforcement, our colleagues from Staffordshire County Council's Trading Standards Section based at Burton-upon-Trent cover issues relating to food composition, labelling, feedingstuffs, premises inspection and weights and measures(**see Appendix 3 Useful Contacts**)

## 2.3 **Scope of the Food Service**

2.3.1 The Commercial Team is responsible for delivering all the Authority's Food Safety Service as relevant to a District Council. This includes:-

- programmed and ad-hoc food hygiene interventions and revisits
- the investigation of complaints regarding food sold or prepared in the District
- the investigation of complaints regarding hygiene standards or practices
- health education and promotional activities
- the provision of low cost training in relation to food safety
- infectious disease control including food poisoning and food borne disease
- responding to food alerts issued by the Food Standards Agency
- the provision of advice and information on food safety issues
- the monitoring of approved premises
- consideration of the environmental aspects of planning and licensing applications
- routine / planned sampling programmes organised in liaison with Staffordshire Chief Environmental Health Officers Food Sampling Sub Group and the Local Authority Co-ordinating Organisation for Regulatory Services (LACORS) and local need.
- imported food control
- illegal food control

2.3.2 All the officers who deliver services within our Commercial Team also undertake certain duties in relation to the delivery of our Occupational Health & Safety Service and certain licensing functions

2.3.3 Whilst undertaking food safety intervention, officers are expected to carry out the following additional:-

- hazard spotting in relation to health & safety issues

- smoking compliance checks
- duty of care checks
- licensing check
- supporting trading standards surveys

2.3.4 All food services are delivered by in house staff, except where food analytical services are used. Casual staff are sometimes used to support our work.

## 2.4 Demands on the Food Service

### 2.4.1 Food Hygiene Interventions

In Lichfield District, the Food Safety Team are responsible for approximately 895 premises, ranging from large manufacturers to one-person operations. A breakdown of the premises, as defined by type in the Food Standards Agency's (as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012) is as follows:

Type of premises	Number
Primary Producers	8
Manufacturer / Packer	25
Importer / Exporter	1
Distributors / Transporters	12
Retailer	167
Restaurant / Caterers	682
<b>Total Number of Premises</b>	<b>895</b>

Of these 895 premises, approximately 500 are due for inspection each year. We also get around 50-60 new businesses per annum. This averages approximately 42 inspections per month for the team.

We also need to establish with OFSTED, the number of childminders in the district and carry out an intervention at any new ones.

### 2.4.2 Approved Premises

The Food Safety Team is responsible for 3 premises under Approved Premises Regulations. Details of these premises are given below:-

Establishment Name	Type of Approval	Approval Number
Highfields Dairy	Dairy Products	LF 001
Willow Wharf Farm	Egg Products	LF 004
Gorse Farm	Egg Packing	LF005

These premises are now inspected in accordance with our risk rating programme.

### 2.4.3 Regionally & Nationally Significant Companies

In the District, there are several large manufacturers / processors including **Soleco Ltd.** (Salad Products - Fradley) of which we have a **Home Authority** relationship and **Mizkan Europe Ltd.** (Preservative Products - Burntwood).

Also within the District we have 2 recognised (in accordance with European and National legislation) Natural Mineral Water Sources at Maple Hayes, Burntwood and Elmhurst Spring, Elmhurst.

Lichfield itself is home to the headquarters of **The Midland Co-operative Society** (Retail) and **Busy Bees Nursery's Ltd** (Child Care), both are regionally and nationally significant companies. We have **Primary Authority** relationships with both of these companies

Referrals from other local authorities into the activities of these companies form a large part of the work generated by such premises.

#### 2.4.5 **Other Factors likely to have an impact on Food Safety Service Delivery in 2012-14**

In addition to some of the demands identified above, other factors are likely to influence the way we work in 2012-14, including:-

- future expenditure reviews that will be carried out by the Council
- further work with our partners in the Greater Birmingham Local Enterprise Partnership to encourage business growth through regulatory support
- further work with our partners as a consequence of the move of the public health function from the NHS to local government (Staffordshire County Council) in April 2013.
- the possible change in government direction in relation to how official food controls are delivered (e.g. the extent to which this remains a statutory function for local government)
- the introduction of a new 'back' office database.
- a review of our working procedures.
- a review of the Regulators Compliance Code
- demands around health & safety enforcement
- demands from other areas of our work including licensing

#### 2.4.6 **Review of official controls delivery**

This is a national review will look at all food safety and standards official controls undertaken by local authorities and port health authorities, which fall within the Food Standards Agency's remit. This will include:

- food hygiene in all UK countries
- food safety issues for food composition and labelling in all UK countries
- food traceability and imports in all UK countries
- the adequacy of laboratory and analytical support for delivering official controls

There are four key stages to the review:

1. Outlining the principles and outcomes and identifying, collating and analysing evidence, this will be completed by March 2013.
2. Describing and comparing the different options, this will be completed by July 2013.
3. Consultation on the recommendations from September 2013 to March 2014.
4. Implementation from April 2014 onwards.

We are actively participating in the review process and will report to elected Members when we know of any outcomes.

#### 2.4.7 **Access to our Service.**

Our Food Safety Service is delivered from The Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire. Service users may contact Officers on site or by leaving a message, in the following ways:-

- ❖ **in person** – between 8.45am and 5.15pm Monday to Friday.
- ❖ **by telephone** – on 01543 308000 or 01543 308999  
between 8.45am and 5.15pm Monday to Friday.  
Out of hours:- 01543 254213
- ❖ **by fax** – on 01543 308728
- ❖ **by e-mail** – [food.safety@lichfieddc.gov.uk](mailto:food.safety@lichfieddc.gov.uk)

For other useful contact addresses and numbers please refer to **Appendix 3**

## 2.5 **Enforcement Policy and its application in Food Safety Service Delivery**

2.5.1 The Council has signed up to follow the principles laid out in the Government's **Enforcement Concordat** and more recently to the principles contained in the **Regulators Guide to Compliance**. A service specific Enforcement Policy has been developed, this was updated and approved by Committee in April 2009.

2.5.2 Underpinning our Enforcement Policy are certain key elements, which are applied to how we deliver our food safety service. These being:-

- a belief that enforcement must be firm but fair;
- the need for proportionality in the application of the law;
- showing transparency about how the service operates;
- a need for targeting of enforcement action based on risk;
- a need to deliver consistency of approach;
- the need to balance enforcement and education

## **SECTION 3: SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **3.1 Food Premises Interventions**



3.1.1 One of this Service Plan's key priorities is to ensure that all our businesses receive an intervention within the minimum frequency set down in Food Law - Code of Practice (England) 2012

The category of the premises, i.e. A – E, is defined by scoring premises around potential hazard associated with the business and food safety compliance, this then relates to the interval between inspections. For example category A premises are inspected every 6 months and category D every 2 years.

Interventions are key to improving compliance with food law by food business operators. The range of possible interventions allows authorised officers to use their professional judgement to apply a proportionate level of regulatory and enforcement activity to each business.

Interventions take the form of official control and intervention which is not an official control.

<p>Official Control interventions include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ monitoring</li> <li>➤ surveillance</li> <li>➤ verification</li> <li>➤ audit</li> <li>➤ inspection</li> <li>➤ sampling and analysis</li> </ul>	<p>Interventions which are not Official Controls:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ targeted education &amp; advice</li> <li>➤ information &amp; intelligence gathering</li> </ul>
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In 2012-14 we intend to continue to use these techniques to help businesses to comply, particularly where the business is already 'broadly compliant' with the law (category C premises only).

The techniques and interventions we can use by category of risk are outlined in the Food Law - Code of Practice (England) 2012

Between 2012-14 we intend to concentrate our resources on non-compliant and higher risk premises identified in an intelligence lead review of our premises profile. This could lead to an increase in enforcement activity carried out at these premises.

The following is a breakdown of categories of risk; frequency of intervention and number of premises within the District due in 2012-13:-

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Frequency of Inspection (At least once every)</b>	<b>Number of premises as of the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012</b>
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A	6 months	7
B	12 months	32
C	18 months	335
D	2 years	150
E	3 years	301
Unrated		70
<b>Total</b>		<b>895</b>

Of the 895 premises, approximately 550 including new premises will be due for an intervention in 2012-13. This averages approximately 42 interventions per month for the team.

- 3.1.2 In 2011-12 we measured some of our performance against these targets to collect performance data:-
- The % of food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law  
**2011-12 - 95%**
  - Satisfaction of businesses with local authority regulation services  
**2011-12 - 98%**
  - % of premises inspected of those due  
**2011-12 figure 98%**
  - % improvement in 0,1 and 2 hygiene rated premises by category year on year  
**New indicator for 2012-14**
- 3.1.3 Past performance figures on inspections against previous years can be seen in **Appendix 4**
- 3.1.4 A variety of means will be used to ensure that individuals and organisations meet with their legal responsibilities relating to food safety during an inspection including education, negotiation, advice, guidance, warning letters, formal notices and prosecution.
- 3.1.5 If a written warning or notice is required following a visit the customer should receive the notification within 10 working days.
- 3.1.6 In addition to visits undertaken as part of the risk assessment programme, interventions are also undertaken in respect of:
- complaints regarding food business operations;
  - enquires and request for advice from a food business;
  - investigation following a poor sampling result;
  - transient stalls and mobiles
  - new business operation or new proprietors
- 3.1.8 New businesses registering with the authority will be inspected within 28 days of the business opening for trading or sooner if requested.

## 3.2 Ratemyplace/National Food Hygiene Rating System

- 3.2.1 Our 'Scores on the Doors' system [www.ratemyplace.org.uk](http://www.ratemyplace.org.uk) continues to go from strength to strength. The scheme's main aim is to allow consumers to make informed choices of where to eat or where to buy their food. Led by Lichfield and developed in partnership with other Staffordshire Authorities, inspection reports for over 3400 premises are now loaded onto the site.
- 3.2.2 In 2012 we began work to migrate the scoring system [www.ratemyplace.org.uk](http://www.ratemyplace.org.uk) to the National Food Hygiene Ratings system [www.ratings.food.gov.uk](http://www.ratings.food.gov.uk) run by the Food Standards Agency. However, we will continue to develop this site to include menu options and enforcement outcomes such as notices and prosecutions etc.
- 3.2.3 Further work is required to update the policy and details on the site. A written procedure will be put in place for operation of the site.

### 3.3 Food and Premises Complaints

- 3.3.1 Food complaints received and investigated by the service fall into one of two broad categories :- food contamination or complaints about food businesses (hygiene and practices).
- 3.3.2 Investigations of food complaints are carried out in accordance with guidelines issued by the Food Standards Agency
- 3.3.3 An initial response to a food complaint will be made within 5 working days. The team investigates an average of 20-25 food complaints and 150 premises complaints annually. We anticipate through better recording mechanisms being introduced in 2012-13, this figure will be higher.

### 3.4 Primary Authority and Home Authority

- 3.4.1 The Council fully supports the national move towards Primary Authorities for businesses. We currently have Primary Authority arrangements on food with the **Midlands Co-operative Society** and **Busy Bees Nurseries Ltd**. This supports the key strategic themes of 'shaping local place and boosting the local economy'
- 3.4.2 We will continue to develop our **Primary Authority** arrangements actively seeking partnerships with companies like **Soleco Ltd** who we currently have a **Home Authority** relationship with.
- 3.4.3 Through this process we have and will be entering charging arrangements with these companies.

### 3.5 Advice to Business

- 3.5.1 The food team will take a proactive role in providing advice to businesses to help them comply with the law and encourage the use of best practice. Such

an approach helps standards of food hygiene to improve and positive relationships to be built with proprietors. This is achieved through:-

- advice given during inspections and other visits
- the provision of advice leaflets
- responding to enquiries
- Safer Food Better Business Coaching

3.5.2 We will also provide advice and assistance to new and proposed businesses at the planning and pre-planning stages and will assist existing businesses that propose to make changes to their operations

3.5.3 Through [www.talktoreg.co.uk](http://www.talktoreg.co.uk) developed by us (as part of the Regulatory Pilot for the Greater Birmingham Local Enterprise Partnership) we will ensure up to date information on contacts is provided to businesses in an easy accessible way.

3.5.4 An initial response to a request for advice will be made within 5 working days. An estimated 250-300 enquiries are received from businesses each year.

### 3.6 **Food Sampling**

3.6.1 The microbiological and physical examination and analysis of food is undertaken on the basis of:-

- businesses identified for sampling as part of nationwide, regional or local schemes
- businesses subject to consumer complaints
- during a programmed inspection where an inspector deems a sample is necessary.

3.6.2 The Council supports all nationally co-ordinated food sampling programmes organised by the Food Standard Agency and Health Protection Agency Laboratory Services.

3.6.3 Such sampling is co-ordinated locally by the Staffordshire Chief Environmental Health Officers Food Liaison Group and carried out by the Officers within the team. A Staffordshire Food Sampling Strategy document is in place for food sampling as well as our own Food Sampling Policy/Programme.

3.6.4 The general principle of this strategy is to make announced surveillance visits with businesses being informed of both the sample collection and results, co-ordinated by each authority in turn. Unannounced sampling is occasionally used to verify complaint allegations and suspicions of contraventions arising from inspection visits.

3.6.5 Samples requiring microbiological examination are sent to the West Midlands Food, Water & Environmental Services based at Good Hope, Sutton Coldfield or otherwise are sent to Staffordshire County Council's Scientific Services. Approximately 120 samples are taken annually.

### 3.7 **Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Diseases(Food Poisoning)**

3.7.1 Investigation of outbreaks will be in accordance with the South Western Staffordshire Joint Outbreak Control Plan co-ordinated by the Health Protection Agency based out of Stafford. The number of notifications received almost always relates to single cases rather than outbreaks. Outbreaks occur very rarely within the District.

3.7.2 The Staffordshire Chief Environmental Health Officers Food Safety Group, in consultation with the Health Protection Agency, has produced guidance on the investigation of infectious diseases and this is followed when dealing with notifications.

3.7.3 All food poisoning notifications are followed-up by a standard letter and questionnaire wherever practicable to identify possible sources of infection and recommend practices to prevent its spread. The West Midlands Food, Water and Environmental Services performs sample analysis.

3.7.4 We have a target response time for infectious disease or outbreak notifications of 1 working day. The team receives approximately 160-180 notifications per year.

### 3.8 **Food Safety Incidents**

3.8.1 The Council complies with Food Safety Act Code of Practice in relation to handling food alerts. "Round-the-clock" contact details have been supplied to the Food Standards Agency. All the officers within the Commercial Team are alerted to food alerts via:-

- mobile phone alerts activated by the Food Standards Agency
- Food Standards Agency E-mail alerts.

3.8.2 We respond to all food alerts that **require action** within 1 working day.

### 3.9 **Liaison with Other Organisations**

3.9.1 Members of the Commercial Team play an active role in the Staffordshire Chief Environmental Health Officers' Food Liaison Group, which is governed by a Core Constitution. The Group's primary aim is to encourage greater consistency in enforcement across the whole of the 9 Staffordshire Authorities represented.

3.9.2 Members of the Commercial Team also attend the Health Protection Agency Community Control of Infection Committee and its Water Sub Committee which was set up to:

- develop guidelines on infection control
- act as advisory groups, on all aspects of communicable diseases
- formulate exercises and where necessary, implement outbreak control plans

### 3.10 Food Safety Promotional Work and Education

3.10.1 Our Food Safety Service is committed to supporting the priorities outlined in the **Sustainable Community Strategy for Staffordshire** particularly in relation to diet in young people and qualifications.

3.10.2 The food safety team can contribute to improving the health of the community by helping to ensure that individuals have access to credible and trustworthy information to enable them to make informed choices that impact on their health. The team will continue to develop its health education role and seek to identify new opportunities to deliver information on food safety and healthy eating, especially to young people. It is also looking at ways healthier food can be accessed more easily.

3.10.4 Lichfield District Council demonstrates a strong commitment to food safety promotion and has delivered/supports programmes such as:-

- 'mission possible' to local school
- undertaking presentations and developing initiatives at local schools ('Alfie & Mollie's Picnic Adventure; Healthy Schools Roadshow's)
- 'Food Safety Week'
- health initiatives and awards

3.10.5 We are looking into the possibilities of supporting a 'Food Bank' run by churches in North Lichfield. This will involve input from some of our Primary Authority Partners.

3.10.4 Low cost food safety training courses are also provided to local businesses. Approximately 50-100 people per year will be trained to the Food Hygiene Level 2 qualification.

## SECTION 4: RESOURCES

### 4.1 Financial Allocation

- 4.1.1 The net expenditure for food law enforcement budgeted for 2012-13 is £116,160. In 2013-14 this net expenditure is expected to be £127,190.
- 4.1.2 A breakdown of expenditure for food safety by activity for 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14 is included in **Appendix 5**. There is a decrease in the net expenditure following the Council's Expenditure Review 2009-10. An increase in 2013-14 is as a result of pension and support cost increases.
- 4.1.3 If legal action is to be taken by the service, costs are met from within the overall environmental health budget under a specified cost area for prosecutions. Where possible costs are recovered.
- 4.1.4 The Council recognises the importance of being able to deal with legal actions and other one off occurrences by maintaining adequate corporate reserves and provisions.

## 4.2 Staffing Allocation

- 4.1.5 Pressures on staffing resources for food safety service delivery are likely to increase. To ensure the viability of our service we are looking at and implementing ways to deliver our service in a number of different ways such as:-
- joint working and sharing services with other Councils
  - the introduction of a new database system
  - changing the way we carry out interventions to release resources in 'pressure areas' such as enforcement
  - raising income through the delivery of training courses and the move to 'Primary Authority' arrangements
- 4.2.1 The staff resources available to undertake food law enforcement during 2012-13 are equivalent to 2.6 full time officers. FTE of 2.6 is equivalent to 572 working days. We believe that we can deliver the service with this resource, using the techniques highlighted above in this time. Resource to task allocation is highlighted in the work/improvement table that follows. A breakdown of this figure based on full time equivalent posts (FTE) is as follows:-

Post	Full Time Equivalent (FTE)
<b>Principal EHO (Commercial Team)</b>	0.4
<b>Casual EHO</b>	0.1
<b>Technical Officer</b>	0.8
<b>Technical Officer</b>	0.6
<b>Technical Assistant</b>	0.7
<b>Total (FTE)</b>	<b>2.6</b>

- 4.2.2 Both Technical Officers are qualified to undertake food safety work. Two officers have the Higher Certificate in Food Premises Inspection and the other the Ordinary Certificate in Food Premises Inspection. The Principal Environmental Health Officer and Casual EHO are qualified to undertake the

whole range of food safety work. When needs be the Environmental Health Manager & Principal EHO (Pollution) are trained to cover food.

4.2.3 Support for our service comes from our Technical Support Officer. Currently the level of this support is 0.25 of a full time equivalent.

#### 4.3 **Staff Development**

4.3.1 The Council recognises that there is a need to invest in the continuing development of staff. Each member of staff takes part in a performance and development review at the beginning of the financial year in order to establish work and performance targets and identify training and development needs.

4.3.2 Within the Commercial Team, such development is needed in order to meet the continuing professional development requirements of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and more specifically requirements contained in the Food Standards Agency's Code of Practice.

4.3.3 All necessary training will be undertaken through in house training, formal courses and vocational visits as appropriate. Sufficient resources will be allocated towards such training and the extent of training will be assessed as part of the development review process.

## **SECTION 5: QUALITY ASSESSMENT**

### 5.1 **Quality Assessment**



- 1.1.1 The work of the team is subject to scrutiny by Members, internal auditors, the Audit Commission, the Food Standards Agency and peer review by other Staffordshire Local Authorities.
- 1.1.2 In July 2009 the Food Standards Agency carried out an Audit of our Service and on the whole the report was positive. Recommendations from this report have been acted upon.
- 5.1.2 The following monitoring arrangements are currently in place to assist in the quality assessment of the work carried out by the food team :-
- sample inspection audits
  - customer satisfaction questionnaires
  - sample audits of food files and associated paperwork
  - performance and development reviews
  - performance monitoring of target response times
  - performance monitoring against targets set down by National Indicators
  - 1:1 meetings with team members
  - team meetings
- 5.1.3 We aim to continue to build on the qualitative aspects of our work and recognise that through the introduction of a new database, the reporting and monitoring of key aspects of our service will improve.
- 5.1.4 In our work programme we will review and improve our documented food procedures required within the Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement.

## **SECTION 6: REVIEW**

### **6.1 Review against the Service Plan**

6.1.1 The process of review will be commenced in March/April each year based on:-

- performance and resources available over the previous 12 months
- responses to feedback from local businesses and the community
- observations from members and the food safety team
- advice and guidance issued by the Food Standards Agency, the Local Authority Co-ordinating Body on Regulatory Services and examples of best practice.

6.1.2 The new Service Plan for 2012-14 will be submitted to the Regulatory & Licensing Committee before being forwarded for endorsement by Council. A briefing paper on the previous year's performance against the Food Safety Service Delivery Plan will be submitted to this Committee in 2013.

## 6.2 Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan

6.2.1 Quarterly performance figures are produced for our National & Local Indicators through our performance monitoring software 'Covalence'. Regular performance reports are submitted to Committee. Any variances against the Food Safety Service Plan, including resource implication, will be addressed during this process.

## 6.3 Work Programme and Areas of Improvement

6.3.1 Both a work and improvement programme have been developed as part of this Service Plan, details of which can be found in the tables below.

### 6.3.2 Work/Improvement Programme 2012-14

Work Activity	Ongoing Work / Improvement Action	Links to Strategic Themes and Foundation. 1. We'll support local people 2. We'll shape local places 3. We'll boost the local economy 4. Performance management				Performance Measures –	Timescales (based on end of reporting years for 2012-14)	Responsibility	Resources (per annum)
		1	2	3	4				
<b>Interventions</b>	To undertake interventions food premises in accordance with our annual programmes for 2012-13; 2013-14  Target worst performing premises to improve standards  To produce LAEMS return		✓	✓	✓	Annual Programme – 550 interventions approx  Monthly target - 42 interventions  100% of all interventions by year end  To improve the number % 'Broadly Compliant' Premises and those premises in the 0,1 & 2 category  95% performance in the 10 day target for turnaround of paperwork	March 2013  March 2014	Food Team/ PEHO	295 days
	To undertake management checks to monitor consistency of intervention and enforcement.				✓	To check against procedures on monitoring of intervention and enforcement  95% compliance / training needs acted upon if identified	Monthly/March 2014	PEHO/EHM	15 days
	To investigate how we can use new intervention techniques to help secure compliance and better use resources		✓	✓	✓	Trial around 'Broadly Compliant' C risk premises	Ongoing	TO/ PEHO	15 days
	To work in partnership with Staffordshire Trading Standards to deliver joint work initiatives		✓	✓	✓	To carry out joint visits to identified premises  To undertake work on Trading Standards Initiatives	March 2013  March 2014	Food Team/ PEHO	20 days

Work Activity	Ongoing Work / Improvement Action	Links to Strategic Themes and Foundation.				Performance Measures –	Timescales (based on end of reporting years for 2012-14)	Responsibility	Resources (per annum)
		1	2	3	4				
<b>Food &amp; Premises Complaints</b>	To investigate all food and premises complaints	✓	✓	✓	✓	To respond to 95% of all food and premises complaints within 5 working days	March 2013 March 2014	Food Team/ PEHO	30 days
<b>Home Authority/Primary Authority</b>	To continue to develop our working arrangements and partnership where we act as a primary authority.  Actively seek new partnerships	✓	✓	✓	✓	Identify monetary savings to business processes and record them.	March 2013 March 2014	TO/PEHO	40 days
<b>Provision of Advice to Business &amp; other Service Users</b>	To respond to all requests for advice from businesses and service users  To further develop <a href="http://www.talktoreg.co.uk">www.talktoreg.co.uk</a> and actively participate in the GBLEP Regulatory Pilot	✓		✓	✓	To respond to 95% of all requests for advice within 5 working days	March 2013 March 2014	Food Team/ PEHO	40 days
<b>Food Sampling</b>	To undertake a food sampling programme based around the Staffordshire Food Safety Liaison Group and the National annual sampling programme  5 sampling studies as part of FSA Grant	✓		✓	✓	To take approximately 120 food samples in 2012-13	March 2013 March 2014	Food Team/ PEHO	20 days
<b>Food Poisoning &amp; Outbreak Investigations</b>	To undertake investigations of all food poisoning or outbreak notifications received	✓		✓	✓	To respond to 95% of all food poisoning or outbreak notifications within 1 working days	March 2013 March 2014	Food Team/ PEHO	20 days

Work Activity	Ongoing Work / Improvement Action	Links to Strategic Themes and Foundation. 1. We'll support local people 2. We'll shape local places 3. We'll boost the local economy 4. Performance management				Performance Measures –	Timescales (based on end of reporting years for 2012-14)	Responsibility	Resources (per annum)
		1	2	3	4				
<b>Food Safety Incidents</b>	To respond to food alerts issued by the Food Standards Agency	✓		✓	✓	To respond to all food alerts received in accordance with guidance issued by the FSA	March 2013 March 2014	Food Team/ PEHO	5 days
<b>Liaison with Other Organisations</b>	To actively participate on the Staffordshire Food Safety Liaison Group	✓	✓	✓	✓	Attendance by a member of the Food Team at 4 meetings	March 2013 March 2014	TO/PEHO	2 days
	To actively participate on the local Health Protection Agencies Community Control of Infection Committee and Water Sub Committee.	✓		✓	✓	Attendance by a member of the Food Team at 1 meeting in 2010-11	March 2013 March 2014	Food Team/ PEHO	1 day
	To work together with partner agencies to help deliver key strategic public health objectives identified in the <b>Enhanced Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</b> and the new <b>Health and Wellbeing Strategy Action Plan</b> .	✓	✓	✓	✓		March 2013 March 2014		5 days
	To obtain feedback from businesses and the local community to allow for the better understanding of how our service works		✓	✓	✓	99% positive feedback about our food safety service	March 2013 March 2014	Food Team/ PEHO	2 days
<b>Food Safety Promotion &amp; Education</b>	To help develop the idea of a community food bank supported by local business	✓			✓	To assess the suitability of the project and pilot the scheme	Feb/March 2013	Food Team/ PEHO	6 days

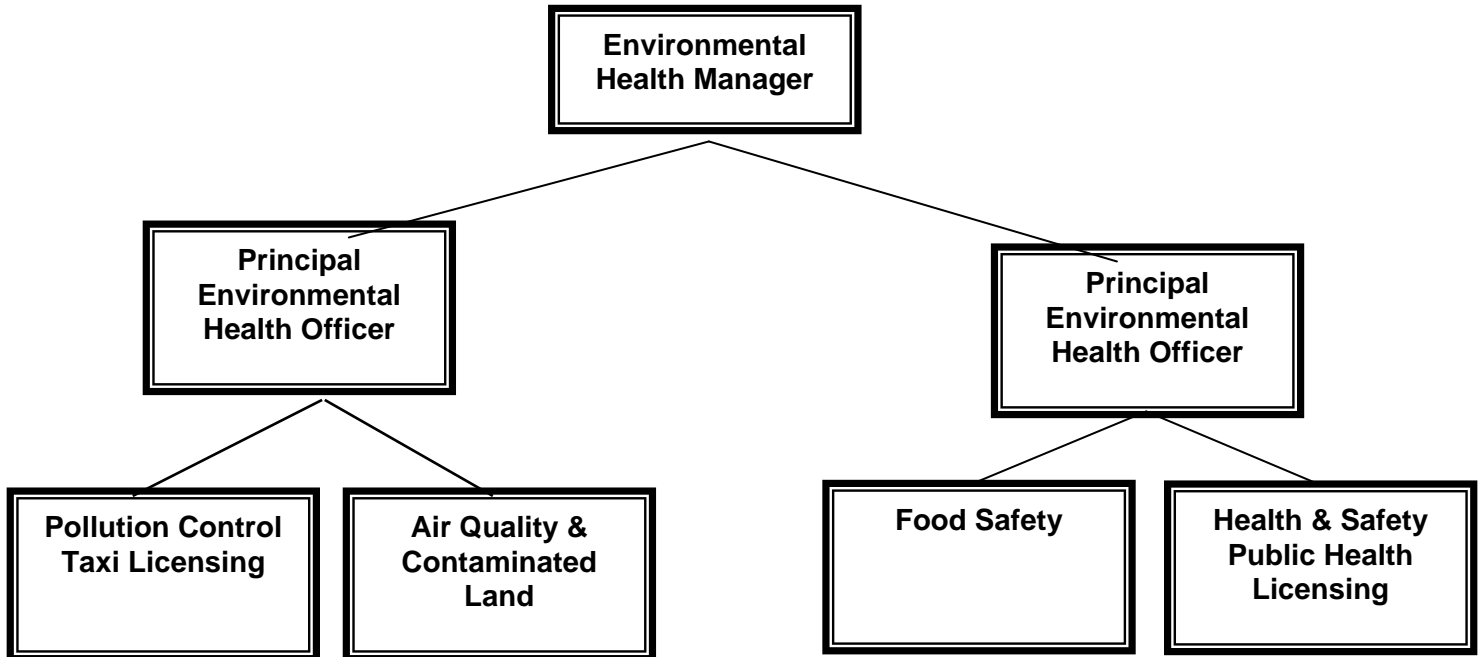
Work Activity	Ongoing Work / Improvement Action	Links to Strategic Themes and Foundation. 1. We'll support local people 2. We'll shape local places 3. We'll boost the local economy 4. Performance management				Performance Measures –	Timescales (based on end of reporting years for 2012-14)	Responsibility	Resources (per annum)
		1	2	3	4				
	To support National Food Safety Week in June 2013	✓		✓	✓	Publicity & Press Releases	June 2013	Food Team	3 days
	To undertake Foundation Level 2 Food Hygiene Training	✓		✓	✓	5 Courses in 2012-13 - Pass rate 100%  Courses in 2013-14 Pass rate 100%	March 2013  March 2014	Food Team	5 days
<b>Additional Work in Food Safety</b>	To review documented procedures for food safety and train officers in their implementation				✓	Completion of procedures and their implementation	March 2013	TO/PEHO	5 days
	To identify and fully implement a new back office system in order for us to report through LAEMS.				✓	Uniform to provide accurate information for performance monitoring and statutory returns.	June 2013	EHM/PEHO/TO	30 days
	All officers undertaking food safety work to have received at least 10 hours training in relevant subject areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	Completion of 10 hours of training	March 2013 March 2014	EHM/PEHO/TO	10 days
	Develop <a href="http://www.ratemyplace.org.uk">www.ratemyplace.org.uk</a> to include menu option and enforcement outcomes  Introduce procedure for operating ratemyplace/ NFHRS			✓	✓	Update ratemyplace policy and procedures .	March 2013	PEHO	6 days

## REFERENCES

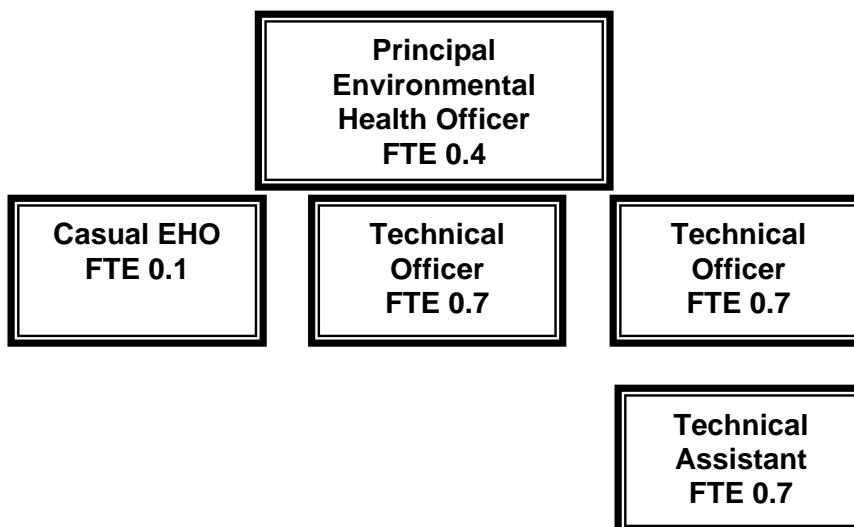
1. Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement 2004 (as amended)
2. Food Standards Agency Strategy Plan for 2011 - 2015
3. Lichfield District Council - Strategic Plan 2012-2016
4. Food Standards Agency Food Safety Act 1990 - Code of Practice & Practice Guidance Notes (2012)
5. Lichfield District Council's Operational Services & Community, Housing and Health Enforcement Policy 2009
6. Local Authority Co-ordinating Organisation for Regulatory Services; Guidelines for Home Authorities – Detailed Guidance for Authorities Acting as a Home Authority 2003
7. Staffordshire Food Sampling Strategy
8. South Western Staffordshire Primary Care Trust Major Communicable Disease Outbreak Plan
9. Staffordshire Chief Environmental Health Officers Food Safety Group – Investigating Notifications of Food Poisonings and Similar Gastrointestinal Illness

## Appendix 1 - Food Safety in the Environmental Health Structure

### Environmental Health

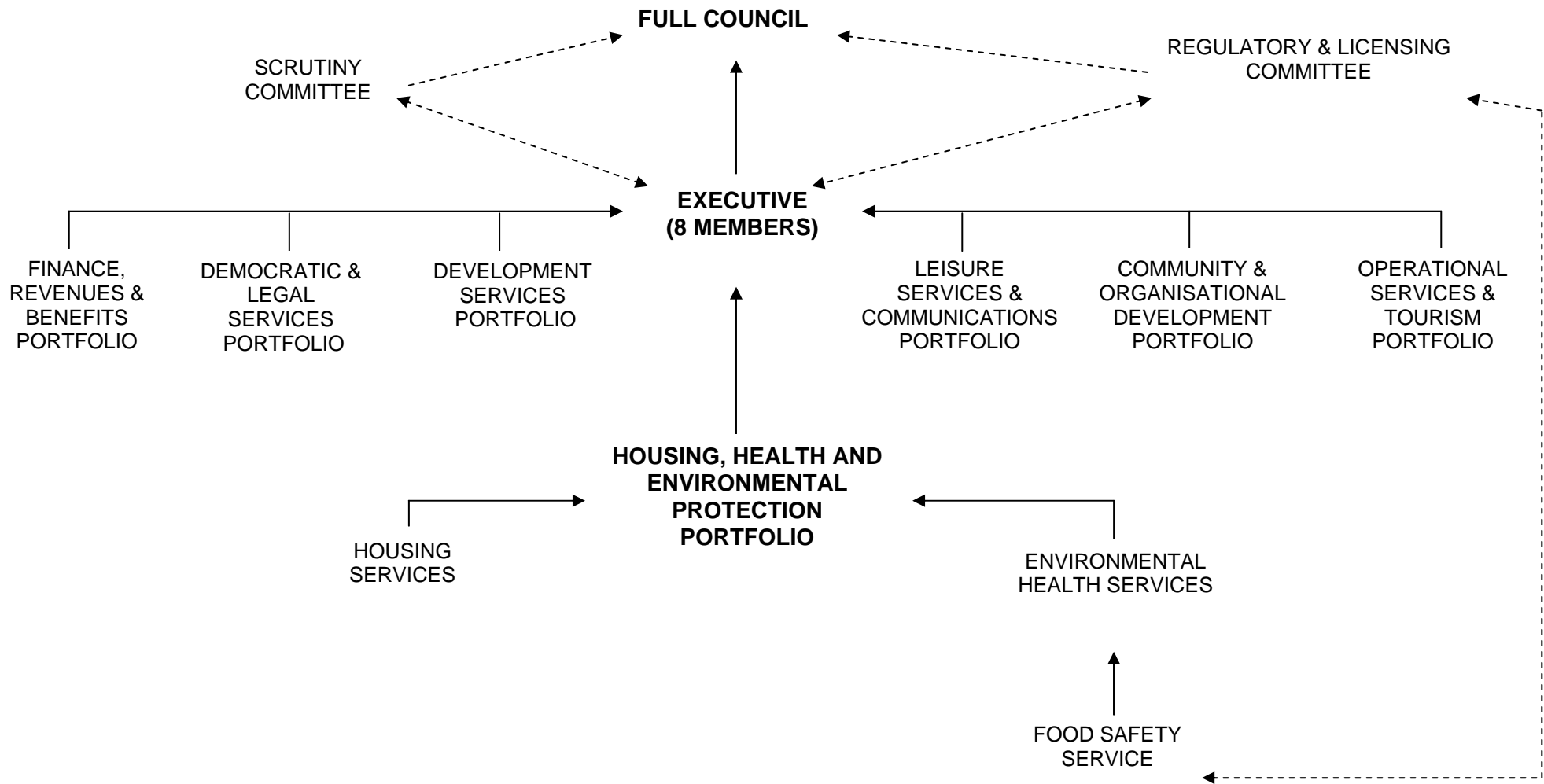


### Commercial Team - Food Safety Service Delivery









## Appendix 3 - Useful Contacts

Lichfield District Council  
Community, Housing & Health  
Food Safety Team  
Council House  
Frog Lane  
Lichfield  
W13 6ZE

Tel:- 01543 308000  
Out of Hours Tel:- 01543 254 213  
Fax:- 01543 308728  
E-mail:- [food.safety@lichfielddc.gov.uk](mailto:food.safety@lichfielddc.gov.uk)  
Web address:- [www.lichfielddc.gov.uk](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk)

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W13 6ZE

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Web address:- [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

Staffordshire County Council Consumer Services  
Trading Standards  
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Fax:- 01283 239915  
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Food Standards Agency  
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Fax:- 020 7276 8463/8446  
E-mail address:- [helpline@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:helpline@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)  
Web address:- [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)

#### Appendix 4 - Performance Indicators for our food safety service

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
The % of food establishments in the area which are broadly complaint with food hygiene law.	95%	Target 96%	Target 97%
Satisfaction of business with local authority regulation services (NI 182)	98	Target 99%	Target 99%
% of premises inspected of those due	98%*	Target 100%	Target 100%
% improvement in: 0 FHR premises 1 FHR premises 2 FHR premises	Not measure	Target Improvement :- 25% 25% 25%	Target:- Improvement 25% 25% 25%

(NB \* did not measure against due date)

**Appendix 5 - A Breakdown of Net Expenditure for Food Safety by Activity from 2009-10 to 2013-14**

Service Head	Budget 2009 - 2010 £	Budget 2010 - 2011 £	Budget 2011 - 2012 £	Budget 2012 - 2013 £	Budget 2013-14
Employee	124,680	114,850	126,550	123,590	124,090
Transport	10,450	10,670	8,990	6,390	6,530
Supplies & Services	4,900	4,970	4,890	4,770	4,810
Central Support	69,940	64,340	41,690	68,480	68,830
Gross Expenditure	209,970	194,830	182,120	203,230	204,260
Income	(36,060)	(36,750)	(39,230)	(49,670)	(39,670)
Recharges	(26,350)	(31,880)	(39,030)	(37,400)	(37,400)
Total Income	(62,410)	(68,630)	(78,260)	(87,070)	(77,070)
Net Expenditure	147,560	126,200	103,860	116,160	127,190

**NB:**

Accounting changes in relation to pensions and central support costs have increased in 2012-13. This will see an overall increase in net expenditure.

We envisage another expenditure review in 2013.