

Cyngor Gwynedd Council Public Protection Service Delivery Plan 20162017



Table of Contents

initions	4
Introduction	5
Service Objectives	6
Aims	6
Objectives	6
Link to Corporate Objectives	7
Performance Monitoring Measures	10
Background	11
Profile of Gwynedd	11
Organisational Structure and Reporting Lines	12
Scope of Food Safety Unit and Trading Standards Unit	12
Specialist External Services / Partners	14
Location of Services	14
Demands on Food Safety Unit	14
Enforcement Policy	15
•	16
	16
, ,	17
` ' '	17
	18
, and the second	19
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	19
	20
	21
	21
•	22
	22
· · ·	23
<u> </u>	24
	25
	25
·	26
	26
•	26
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	27
	27
	28
	28
	29
	31
	31
	31 32
	Introduction Service Objectives Aims Objectives Link to Corporate Objectives Performance Monitoring Measures Background Profile of Gwynedd Organisational Structure and Reporting Lines Scope of Food Safety Unit and Trading Standards Unit Specialist External Services / Partners Location of Services Demands on Food Safety Unit Enforcement Policy Service Delivery Food Premises Interventions Hygiene Interventions at Primary Producers The National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) Gwynedd Council Food Hygiene Intervention Programme 16-17 Gwynedd Council Standards Intervention Programme 16-17 Gwynedd Council Primary Producers Intervention Programme 16-17 Significant Breaches Enforcement Visits Request for a Re-rating—Food Hygiene Rating Scheme Food Complaints Primary Authority / Home Authority and Advice to business Food Sampling and Inspections The Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease Food Safety Incidents Liaison with other organisations Food Safety Promotion Food Safety Formal Action Safer Food Better Business (SFBB)

7.1	Review against the Service Plan	32
7.2	Review of performance against 2015-16 Service Plan	32
7.3	Achievements	33
7.4	Service Delivery for 2016-17	34
7.5	Factors likely to have an impact on service delivery during 2016-17	35
	Appendix 1-Food Hygiene Performance 15-16	37
	Appendix 2-Food Standards Performance 15-16	41
	Appendix 3- Primary producers (Hygiene) Performance `15-16	43

Document Control

Name	Food Safety, Standards and Hygiene Service Plan
Version	1.0
Status	Live
Lead officer	Alun Evans, Public Protection Manager
Signature	Lewis Blue Evers.
Produced by	Public Protection Service
Approved by	Dafydd Wyn Williams
Designation	Head of Regulatory
Signed	Dafydd Linians.
Approved date	6/1/17
Next review date	1/04/17

DEFINITIONS

BRDO - Better Regulation Delivery Office – now known as Regulatory Delivery

CEFAS - Centre for the Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science

CIEH - Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

CPD - Continuing Professional Development

CSSIW - Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

DPPW - Directors of Public Protection Wales

APP - Public Protection database system

(FLARE)

FHRS - Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

FSA - Food Standards Agency

FTE - Full Time Equivalent

LA - Local Authorities

MHS - Meat Hygiene Service

PHW - Public Health Wales

NWDSLG - North Wales and Deeside Shellfish Liaison Group

NWFCDP - North Wales Food and Communicable Disease Panel

PHLS - Public Health Wales Microbiology Division Laboratory Service

SFBB - Safer Food Better Business

SME - Small to Medium Sized Enterprises

UK - United Kingdom

WFMF - Welsh Food Microbiological Forum

WFFU - Welsh Food Fraud Unit

WHoEH - Welsh Heads of Environmental Health

WHoTS Welsh Heads of Trading Standards

WLGA - Welsh Local Government Association

WW - Welsh Water

1.0 Introduction

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) as part of its national food safety framework agreement requires all local authorities to prepare an annual service delivery plan.

The plan should reflect the work required of food authorities by the FSA, under the requirements of the Food Standards Act 1999 and the framework agreement on local authority enforcement.

This service delivery plan details food safety, food standards and food hygiene (primary production) controls that are to be delivered in 2016/17 by the Public Protection Service of Gwynedd Council.

The plan seeks to ensure that all national priorities and standards are delivered locally and provides a balanced approach to local food safety / standards enforcement. This shall be achieved by not merely directing resources towards a programmed intervention process, but also by ensuring that adequate provision is made to address complaints, food poisoning notifications, advice to businesses, and undertaking intelligence driven areas of work such as sampling, targeted interventions, other reactive interventions and campaign work.

2.0 Service Objectives

2.1 Aim

The Public Protection Service is committed to ensuring that food and drink intended for sale for human consumption, which is produced, stored, distributed, handled or consumed within the County is without risk to the health and safety of the consumer and conforms to composition and labelling requirements.

The Service will adopt an approach to enforcement based upon an assessment of the risk to public health and a failure to meet statutory requirements.

The Public Protection Service has an Enforcement Policy and staff will carry out activities in this Service Plan in accordance with this policy.

Regard will be made to guidance contained in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 and to guidance from recognised bodies such as the BRDO (Regulatory Delivery).

The Service will also contribute towards fulfilling the Council's obligations under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the Public Protection Service in relation to food safety are as follows:

- To carry out an annual food hygiene and food standards inspection programme in accordance with statutory requirements, the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 and relevant guidance. Subject to the availability of suitably qualified officers, such interventions will be undertaken co-incidentally with interventions undertaken in respect of other statutory functions.
- Support the annual inspection programmes with other interventions such as audits, alternative enforcement and food sampling; where necessary and appropriate to do so.
- Investigate complaints and to take appropriate action in accordance with Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 and relevant guidance.
- To provide information and advice to businesses and consumers. Where resources allow, support food businesses and consumers with targeted promotional advice and educational initiatives.
- Approve product specific establishments subject to regulation in accordance with

guidance.

• Maintain and improve food safety enforcement staff competencies.

2.3 Links to Corporate Objectives

The aim of Gwynedd Council is explained in its Strategic Plan 2013-17 and is to seek the "Best for the People of Gwynedd Today and Tomorrow". The overall vision is: "Supporting the people of Gwynedd to thrive in difficult times". This strategic plan identifies a vision in each listed thematic area. The thematic areas are;

- Children and Young People
- Care, Health and Well-being
- The Economy
- The Environment
- Strong Communities
- Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council

The following table details some of the links between the work of the Service and some of the 21 improvement objectives which span the 6 core thematic areas in the strategic plan.

Thematic Area	Improvement Objective	Link to Service work	
Children and Young People	Improving the Suitability of the Schools System	The food team undertakes interventions including inspections and the provision of advice at school kitchens throughout the county. The interventions ensure compliance with hygiene and standards legislation. Officers also advise the Education Authority on food hygiene / standards requirements with respect to procurement arrangements. This work contributes towards the objective.	
Care, Health and Well-being Safeguarding Children and Adults Improving the Conditions for Gwynedd's Residents to Live Healthily		By implementing programmed interventions and dealing with complaints and outbreaks of food poisonings and communicable disease the service aims to protect the health of people in Gwynedd. Furthermore, the service also aims to ensure that food brought /	

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Many	y food outlets in Gwynedd are
Corre	ect and safe use of food
supp sector econ	orts the retail and services or which helps maintain the local omy.
Emissions service inspections than when number	ers undertaking front line ces are tasked with completing ections which combine more one enforcement responsibility re possible. Consequently the oer of visits involving transport ar are reduced
	ont-line services are delivered / able through the medium of sh
communities. good contr	Service's work in promoting business practice / compliance butes towards securing ainable rural communities.
Business Arrangements of the Council the Council the whole Council of putting the 'people of Gwynedd central to everything we do'. people of Gwynedd const in the	service ethos is to place the ble of Gwynedd central to ything we do. There is a tant drive to seek improvements a service offered to customers, oving efficiencies and driving

early intervention.	The service encourages enquiries and complaints from businesses and the general public. Users of the service are regularly consulted to
	ascertain whether the service is meeting their needs. Staff are developed and given training to ensure that they are
	competent to carry out their respective duties. In undertaking planned interventions
	the service reduces demand on other Council services and The Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board.

This Plan contributes to making Gwynedd a healthy, safe and sustainable place to live and work.

2.4 Performance Monitoring Measures.

The service performance (food safety, standards and hygiene) indicators for 2016-17 are listed below. The performance indicators are used, in part, to measure the service's contribution towards meeting the objectives of the Gwynedd Council Strategic Plan 2013-17

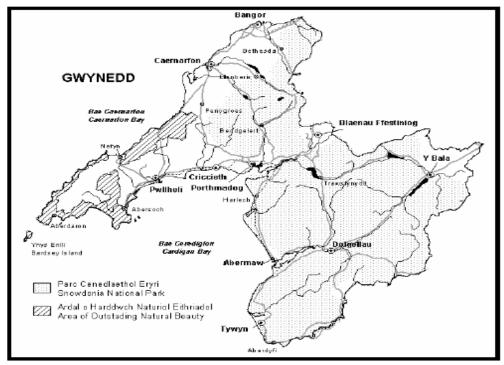
Unit	Reference	Description			
Public Protection	GyC02	% of customers who responded to the survey that they			
		were satisfied or very satisfied with the level of service			
	GyC03	% of service requests solved within target			
	GyC04	% of service requests solved within 6 months			
	GyC25	% of new businesses identified which had a risk			
		assessment visit or which had a self-assessment survey			
		during the year			
	GyC26	% of high risk businesses liable to be inspected that were			
		inspected.			
	PAM9a	% of food establishments in the system which has			
		achieved a food hygiene rating score of 4/5.			
	PPN/007	% of significant breaches rectified through intervention			
		for Public Protection			

3.0 Background

3.1 Profile of Gwynedd

Gwynedd is located in North West Wales. It is the second largest County in Wales, accounting for 12.26% of the total land area, covering an area of 2,548 square kilometres. Gwynedd extends from Abergwyngregyn in the north to Aberdyfi in the south, a road distance of 130 Kilometres, and from Uwchmynydd in the west to Llandderfel in the east; a road distance of 103km. At 301 kilometres, Gwynedd has the longest coastline of all Unitary Authorities in Wales. The main settlements in Gwynedd are Caernarfon, Bangor, Porthmadog, and Dolgellau.

The mid-year population estimate for 2014 for Gwynedd was 122,273 (www.statswales.wales.gov.uk). There is a concentration of the population resident in the north of the County in Bangor, Caernarfon and surrounding towns and villages.



3.2 Organisational Structure and Reporting lines

The Public Protection Service Units which will deliver the work detailed in this plan are the Food Safety Unit and Trading Standards Unit. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory matters has responsibility for The Public Protection Service. The Communities Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinizing both his decisions and the delivery of the service by the Regulatory Department.

The Public Protection service management hierarchy is detailed below:

Head of Regulatory Department

▼
Senior Public Protection Manager

▼
Public Protection Managers

Environmental Health / Public Protection Officers, Trading Standards Officers, Food Safety Officers, Enforcement Officers, Technical Officers and Food Sampling Officer.

3.3 Scope of the Food Safety Unit and Trading Standards Units work

Both units contribute towards and maintain:

- Establishing and maintaining an up to date register of all food premises within the County.
- Planned Interventions of Food Premises All high risk food businesses are subjected to interventions on a regular basis. The frequency of intervention at each food business is programmed according to the food establishment intervention rating scheme as prescribed in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014. Officers advise on good practice and ensure compliance with legal requirements. Food Hygiene interventions are programmed such that they can be undertaken jointly with Standards and/ or Health and Safety work as far as possible.
- Revisits Where the operator of a food business is required to undertake works in order to comply with the food safety /standards legislation, a revisit may be undertaken after the date specified for compliance.
- Investigation of Complaints The service responds to all complaints about food businesses and food purchased within the area of Gwynedd Council that are not anonymous. Each complaint is investigated to determine appropriate enforcement action and to ensure precautions are taken to prevent a recurrence. This often involves contacting manufacturing companies and other local authorities.

- Identifying new food businesses early in the life of those businesses and visiting those premises to undertake interventions and provide advice and guidance.
- Investigation of Food Borne Illnesses Notification of cases of food poisoning are received from general practitioners, Public Health Wales (PHW) and their laboratory services. Each notification is investigated and appropriate action taken to prevent the spread of infection.
- Food Hygiene / Standards Promotion and Education As part of the service's commitment to promoting public health various food safety initiatives are undertaken. Previously these have included seminars to local businesses, involvement in the FSA's food safety week, the provision of newsletters and providing advice and assistance to businesses at the time of intervention and on request.
- Food Alerts and Incidents –When food alerts are issued by the FSA in respect of certain foodstuffs and where necessary the service takes all appropriate measures to ensure foods are withdrawn from sale within the County.
- Food Premises Approvals Certain food operations require prior approval by the local authority. In Gwynedd these include operations involving dairy products, meat products, fish products, eggs and shellfish depuration. Premises are inspected prior to issuing approvals and are regularly monitored thereafter to ensure continued compliance with legal requirements.
- Food Sampling Sampling is undertaken to monitor food safety and standards compliance during interventions and as part of national, regional and local sampling programmes.
- Shellfish Sampling Sampling is undertaken to monitor the hygiene status of designated shellfish production areas.
- Imported Food Investigating allegations or circumstances which indicate that imported food might be contaminated, adulterated, or illegally imported, taking action to deal with any issues.
- Mineral / spring water Three water bottling plants are currently overseen by the service. Interventions are carried out on a regular basis to ensure that the water is fit for human consumption and the information provided to consumers complies with current legislation.
- Other Services –Officers with established competencies may be required to address both occupational health and safety and food standards matters arising during the

course of food safety interventions. They also, where necessary, investigate water borne incidents and infectious disease other than food poisoning, comment on applications for premises licences under the Licensing Act 2003 and on planning and building control applications relating to food premises.

3.4 Specialist External Services/Partners

Food Analytical Services Eurofins Laboratories Ltd

Food Examiner Public Health Wales Microbiology, Ysbyty Gwynedd

Proper Officers Public Health Wales

3.5 Location of Services

The service is delivered from three area offices which are Swyddfa Ardal Arfon, Caernarfon; Swyddfa Ardal Dwyfor, Pwllheli and Swyddfa Ardal Meirionnydd, Dolgellau. The office opening hours are Monday to Friday 09:00 – 17:00.

Out of hours interventions are carried out where premises do not trade during the daytime. It is the policy for food interventions, unless in exceptional circumstances, to be carried out unannounced to allow the actual business operations to be observed. There is also an out of hour's service to deal with emergencies.

3.6 Demands on the Food Safety Unit

Gwynedd contains a mix of manufacturers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and catering establishments. Catering and retail are the dominant sectors. The businesses are predominantly small to medium sized enterprises (SME). The County also contains a large number of primary food producers (mainly livestock).

On the 1st April 2016 Gwynedd Council was responsible for enforcing food safety in 2147 food premises within Gwynedd. Similarly, the Council was responsible for 1859 businesses involved in the primary production of food.

The risk assessment programme for food safety and standards is set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 intervention rating scheme and the criteria provides that all food premises should be subject to a degree of surveillance. The method of surveillance that may be applied varies in accordance with the risk rating of the business; alternative enforcement methods may be used for the lowest risk premises.

Table showing number of Gwynedd food businesses per classification

	Number of premises (As at 01/04/16)
Primary Producers (Food)	18
Manufacturers and Packers	137
Importers and Exporters	0
Distributors and Transporters	16
Retailers	462
Restaurants and Caterers	1514
Total	2147
of which are Approved Premises	27

Gwynedd has a number of classified shellfish beds which are subject to regulation. The Authority is responsible for processing samples of shellfish and water in the locality of beds to ensure that they meet strict microbial and chemical quality standards. The officers involved require specialist training.

Similarly, the enforcement of food safety regulations within the water bottling plants require officers to receive specialist training.

Approximately 340 food premises are open on a seasonal basis within the County. Such businesses are predominately open during the summer months. This places an added burden on the Service during the Summer due to the increase in scheduled inspections, coupled with an increase in complaints and requests for service due to the general temporary increase in the population locally form tourism.

There are approximately between 40-50 businesses within Gwynedd whose operators first language is neither Welsh nor English. This can pose a challenge to officers undertaking interventions at the businesses in terms of relaying information and securing conformance with current legislation. There is cause on occasion to utilise translation services with the cost borne by the Authority.

3.7 Enforcement Policy

The public protection enforcement policy was approved by Committee on the 28 October 2011. The enforcement policy can be found on the Council Website (www.gwynedd.gov.uk). Enforcement decisions will be documented and monitored to demonstrate adherence with the policy. In addition to this there are comprehensive procedures available to ensure consistency of service.

4.0 **Service Delivery**

4.1 **Food Premises Interventions**

Service interventions at food premises are prioritised in accordance with the premises risk rating as previously established, in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014.

Interventions are defined in the code as activities that are designed to monitor, support and increase food law compliance within a food establishment, they include, but are not restricted to, 'official controls' as defined in Article 2 (1) of Regulation EC 882/2004.

Official control interventions that may be used include inspections, partial inspections, audits, surveillance visits, verification visits, monitoring visits and sampling visits where analysis/examination is to be carried out at an official laboratory. Where circumstances allow and in particular for low risk premises, other interventions that are not official controls may be used. These include education, advice, coaching and information gathering.

The Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 details the minimum intervention frequencies for specific categories of premises and the type of interventions which may be appropriate, to which are as follows:

Food Hygiene minimum intervention frequencies

		OFFICIAL CONTROLS					_	THER ENTIONS		
Risk Category	Inspection	Partial Inspection	Audit	Monitoring	Surveillance	Verification	Sampling	Education, Advice and Coaching	Information, Intelligence Gathering and Sampling	Minimum Frequency of Intervention
A ²	Х	Х	Χ							6 months
B ²	Х	Х	Х							12 months
C ²	Х	Х	Х							18 months
C: Broadly Compliant ¹	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х			18 months
D	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	24 months
E	All official controls and / or Alternative Enforcement Strategy Every 3 years									

^{1 -} Premises which are able to demonstrate, and have been assessed as, having good conditions, systems and management which score

</= 10 in the rating system (i.e. good premises).

2 For Food standards, the minimum intervention frequencies for category A premises is 12 months, category B 24 months and category C premises should be subject to an alternative enforcement strategy or intervention every five years.

4.2 Hygiene Interventions at Primary Producers.

The Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 details a risk based approach to undertaking interventions at primary food producers.

Where a business is found to be generally compliant with food legislation and where the risk category reflects this, alternative official controls may be used as interventions instead of inspections.

Any intervention undertaken will seek to establish that the food business operator and any employees have an understanding of the hazards posed by the business and whether or not adequate measures are in place to control the hazards and ensure that food entering the food chain is safe to eat.

4.3 The National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

From the 1st of October 2010 Gwynedd Council participated in the all Wales voluntary food hygiene rating scheme. On the 27th of November 2013 the voluntary scheme was replaced by a statutory regime, introduced via The Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013. The Act requires local authorities to operate a food hygiene rating scheme and rate food businesses within their area. Also, the Act places a duty on food businesses to display their food hygiene rating at their establishment. The intention of the Act is to ensure that consumers are provided with information about the food hygiene standards of food businesses in Wales. This will enable consumers to make better informed choices about where to buy food.

Ratings are listed on the Food Standards Agency website http://ratings.food.gov.uk/.

The Food Hygiene Rating Guidance for Local Authorities (issued by the Food Standards Agency in March 2014) advises that a food hygiene rating may only be given following an inspection.

4.4 Gwynedd Council Food Hygiene Intervention Programme 2016-17

For 2016-17 High Risk category A, B, and C premises will be subjected to an intervention in line with the food establishment intervention rating scheme.

The authority will also attempt to undertake official controls at all risk category D premises which are scheduled for an intervention.

Furthermore, resources will be allocated to undertake interventions in risk category E premises due / overdue for an intervention. Priority will be given to those premises which have not been subject to an intervention for a considerable length of time and those which fall under the food hygiene rating scheme. The controls exerted will depend on the nature of the business but are likely to involve inspection or (for non FHRS premises) a telephone questionnaire, in accordance with an alternative enforcement strategy.

Non-high risk premises interventions will only be carried out where resources allow.

It is the Food Safety Unit's policy to carry out programmed high risk (A,B, and C) Food Hygiene interventions in accordance with the minimum inspection frequencies as outlined in the food establishment intervention rating scheme already mentioned. These interventions are all prioritised in accordance with the food safety risks posed by the premises. This is assessed by consideration of the nature of the food handling involved, the standards maintained, and the quality of management.

The following table shows the premises that will be liable to an intervention in the year 2016-17. These figures include premises deferred and outstanding from the previous year due to factors such as being closed over certain periods / seasons.

Premise Profile	Number of Premises (at 01/04/16)	Estimated number of interventions required during the
		year
Category A	7	14
Category B	69	69
Category C	870	592
Category D	442	183
Category E	725	322
Unrated	27	27
Outside programme	7	-
TOTAL	2147	1207

The aim is to inspect 100% of the high risk premises (ABCs) due during the year.

4.5 Gwynedd Council Standards Intervention Programme 2016-17

For 2016-17 High Risk category A premises will be subjected to an intervention in line with the food establishment intervention rating scheme.

The authority will also attempt to undertake official controls at the majority of risk category B premises which are scheduled for an intervention.

In accordance with the drive for improvement in efficiency officers undertaking food hygiene interventions now also undertake food standards interventions at the same time, if due or overdue in the same year.

Because of the shortage of resources, it is the Food Safety Unit's policy not to carry out programmed Food Safety inspections in respect of Category C (Low Risk) retail businesses as a matter of routine. Where circumstances allow, an effort will be made to subject such premises to an alternative enforcement strategy at least once every 5 years.

The table below details the food standards interventions required during 16-17.

Premise Profile: Food Standards (Risk Categories A-C)	Estimated Number of Premises (As of 01/04/16)	Estimated number of primary inspections / interventions required during the year (01/04/16 - 31/03/17)
Category A	4	4
Category B	619	371
Category C	1438	461
Outside Programme	6	0
Unrated	80	80
TOTAL	2147	916

4.6 Gwynedd Council Primary Producers Intervention Programme 2016-17

Interventions at primary producers should be carried out at frequencies based on their established risk. Factors taken into account are membership of recognised assurance schemes and other local intelligence. Inspections of primary producers are generally carried out in conjunction with animal feed inspections which are scheduled in accordance with the Priority Action Plan submitted annually to the Welsh Government. The Feed action plan involves all North Wales Authorities.

Officers who previously undertook food hygiene interventions at primary producers do not have the necessary qualifications (as stipulated in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014) to continue doing so. Consequently, Gwynedd's regulatory effort in this regard will be substantially less for the coming year when compared to previous years. The driver for hygiene inspections will be the animal feed inspection programme. The frequency of animal feed inspections is generally higher than the frequency of primary production inspections. In practice primary producers are inspected at the same frequency as those identified in the Priority Action Plan for animal feed inspections whether they are due for inspection or not.

Premises Profile: Food Hygiene of Livestock at Primary	Estimated Number of Premises (As at 01/04/16)	Estimated number of primary inspections during the year
Production Level	(710 01 0 170 1710)	(01/04/16 - 31/03/17)
Members of		
assurance schemes	610 (*)	40
Non-members of recognised	1249	70
assurance schemes		
TOTAL	1859	110

^(*) Assured British Meat, Assured Combinable Crops Scheme, Farm Assured Welsh Livestock

4.7 Significant Breaches

During interventions and also as a result of information obtained from a complaint or other request for service Significant Breaches may be detected. A Significant Breach is a breach of public protection legislation, which, in the judgement of the discovering officer, acting in accordance with the terms of the Enforcement Policy, is sufficiently serious that an appropriate action must be taken to ensure that the breach be rectified.

For Public Protection this is a recognised performance indicator and is used to measure how successful the Service has been in rectifying major problems (Significant Breaches). The indicator acts as a driver ensuring there is a positive outcome for every serious problem that is identified.

A breach is deemed to be rectified where the legislation is no longer being breached and the alleged offender has taken such steps to ensure, in the opinion of the investigating officer, that there is little likelihood of it continuing.

4.8 Enforcement Revisits

There is an expectation that any premise that receives a food hygiene rating of less than 3 will receive an enforcement revisit because this is deemed to be a significant breach of the law.

The timing of the revisit will be determined by the action taken as a result of the earlier intervention. It will depend on the nature of the works required. However, it is expected that a revisit of a premise with a hygiene rating of 0 will be undertaken within 28 days. Where there is a major concern with regards to the cleanliness of the premise a shorter time may be more appropriate. Premises with a rating of 1 or 2 should be revisited within a 3 month period depending on the contraventions found at the initial intervention.

Such a revisit should, whenever practicable, be undertaken by the officer who undertook the original intervention.

There is also an expectation where a significant breach is identified under food standards legislation that a revisit will occur. The timescale will depend on the risks associated with the breach but should be undertaken within a 3 month period.

4.9 Request for Re-rating-Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

Re-ratings will be undertaken when a Food Business Operator has taken action to rectify non-compliances identified during the most recent inspection and submit a satisfactory request to the authority for their Food Hygiene Rating to be re-assessed.

The re-rating inspection should take place in accordance with the scheme. Such an inspection should, whenever practicable, be undertaken by the officer who undertook the original inspection.

4.10 Food Complaints

All food hygiene complaints that are not anonymous and relate to food bought within the county are investigated. It is the food safety service's policy to give a first response within 5 working days to all food and food premises complaints. .

In 2015-16 50 complaints relating to microbiological, foreign body and chemical contamination of food were received, 23 more than the previous year. Sixteen complaints were received in relation to hygiene standards at food businesses and 6 in relation to unhygienic practices.

Similarly, all complaints (not made anonymously) received in relation to food standards or primary production will be responded to within 5 working days. In 2015/16 the service received 27 complaints in relation to food standards, four more than the previous year. No complaints in respect of food hygiene at primary production level were received.

4.11 Primary Authority / Home Authority and Advice to Business

The Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 established the Primary Authority Scheme as a statutory scheme. Under the scheme businesses can choose to form a partnership with a local authority that will govern the way that the business is regulated by all Local Authorities. The BRDO (Regulatory Delivery) operate the scheme.

A Primary Authority may provide a key point of contact for a business that it partners in relation to other Local Authorities which regulate it. A Primary Authority may also offer a lead on regulatory matters concerning the business.

Gwynedd Council has currently no primary authority agreement in place. However, Officers are bound to abide by Primary Authority Agreements which are in place for businesses with outlets within the area.

The Home Authority Principle is a scheme or arrangement to help businesses by providing a point of contact /advice to the business and other local authorities, usually at the Local Authority where the head office or main operation is located.

Although Gwynedd has no recognised Home Authority agreement in place the Food Unit will follow the Home Authority principles when contacted by other Authorities in relation to businesses based in the area.

Advice is offered to any business that has trading premises within Gwynedd unless the trader has a Primary Authority arrangement with another local authority. This is achieved by providing advice directly to businesses and through the provision of training courses which may be held locally.

4.12 Food Sampling and Inspections

Food and drink supplied, produced and sold within the County is sampled in accordance with a planned sampling programme and where necessary, in response to food complaints / investigations. The Food unit will also participate in North Wales, UK and European sampling programmes where relevant.

The standards sampling programme will effectively be driven by the North Wales (Trading Standards) collaboration project. The programme has been formed by WHoTS.

The results of food samples analysis are uploaded to the FSA via their UKFSS Net system.

During 2015-16 487 programmed food hygiene samples were taken (not including resamples). Theses samples were taken as part of a standard sampling programme and two targeted sampling programmes. One targeted programme involved sampling sauce sachets included with pre-packed raw fowl meat for the presence and number of campylobacter colonies. The other programme assessed the microbial quality of pies kept in hot holding booths.

Of the programmed samples taken only ten were found not to meet current microbial standards. For the coming year sampling resources will be targeted at specific issues. Two sampling projects will be targeting food which have previously been found with elevated level of microbes; sandwich fillers and ice cream.

Sixteen programmed food standards samples were taken during 15-16. Issues relating to meat species and substitution were identified in four of these samples. Twenty four food standard samples are programmed for this year (16-17). We will also look to undertake more samples form approved establishments and large manufacturers.

The Food Safety Unit also undertakes routine sampling of shellfish from classified harvesting areas to monitor their hygiene status. Data obtained from the sampling is used to ascertain whether or not the classification is accurate.

Samples are taken on a quarterly basis from two sites and on a monthly basis from six sites. Two of the six (monthly) sites are sampled twice a month between April and September. Following a request form the Food Standards Agency the Authority will take a further bio toxin sample on a monthly basis from a specific location in the Menai during 2016-17.

Food samples are analysed by Public Health Wales Microbiology, Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor and the Public Analyst, (Eurofins Scientific Laboratories) in Wolverhampton. The Centre for the Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) laboratories are used occasionally for processing shellfish samples.

4.13 The Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

The Food Safety Unit investigates all outbreaks and notifications of food related disease in accordance with accepted procedures and advice from its Proper Officer.

Between the PHW and the Food Safety Unit there are formal arrangements in place to identify and investigate cases of food poisoning. All laboratory identified cases of food poisoning are notified directly to the food safety section for investigation.

All incidents of food poisoning or alleged food poisoning are investigated with a view to tracing the source and preventing spread and reoccurrence.

During 2015-16 18 requests for investigating food poisonings which included unconfirmed notifications were accepted from members of the public / organisations other than PHW (15 less than 14-15), 12 service requests relating to non – foodborne infectious disease (12 less than in 14-15) and 2 zoonosis service request (1 received during 14-15).

The table below gives the total number of confirmed notifications of foodborne and non-foodborne infections directed to the Authority from PHW during 2014-15 and 15-16. No outbreak of notifiable disease was declared in Gwynedd during 2015-16.

Disease causing agent	Total notifications 14-15	Total notifications 15-16
(confirmed)		
Campylobacter	177	157
Salmonella Typhimurium	2	0
Salmonella Enteritidis	1	1
Other Salmonellas	12	12
Giardia Lamblia	5	10
Cryptosporidium	25	16
Legionella	2	0
Noro virus	1	0
E.Coli	0	2
Lysteria Monocytogenes	0	1
Shigellosis	0	1
TOTAL	225	200

4.14 Food Safety Incidents

The FSA declares food safety incidents from time to time and notifies food authorities of these electronically by email. Some of the notifications are for information only and some are for action.

The Service has a documented procedure for dealing with Food Safety Incidents Alerts following notification through the Food Alert system.

During 2015/6 the service logged 76 Food Alerts, one of which required action by the Authority. This was a 100% increase on the previous year total food alters received. During the same period 87 allergy alerts were received, an increase of 210% on the previous year. One required further action.

4.15 Liaison with other Organisations

The Food Safety unit participates with the following liaison groups or organisations related to food safety issues in an endeavour to ensure that the service and/or any enforcement action taken within the County of Gwynedd is consistent with those of neighbouring local authorities, that service improvements can be identified, and that competence based training can be accessed.

- Welsh Government
- Directors of Public Protection Wales (DPPW)
- Welsh Heads of Environmental Health Group (WHoEH)
- Wales Heads of Trading Standards (WHoTS)
- North Wales Food and Communicable Disease Panel (NWFCDP)
- North Wales Heads of Trading Standards Food & Metrology Group
- Welsh Food Microbiological Forum (WFMF)
- Public Health Wales (PHW)
- North Wales and Deeside Shellfish Liaison Group (NWDSLG)
- Gang masters Licencing Authority
- Natural Resources Wales
- Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)
- Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)
- Welsh Water (WW)
- Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Welsh Food Fraud Advisory Unit (WFFU)

4.16 Food Safety Promotion

Dependant on available resources, the Food Safety unit carries out health promotion exercises covering food safety and hygiene.

As part of the North Wales Public Protection Collaborative working project Gwynedd's food unit works with other North Wales Authorities in bringing to fruition food safety related projects. A number are being considered for 2016/7. Two projects completed during 2015/6 were:

- 1. Focussed support for businesses with poor premises hygiene rating- targeted visits to promote effective cleaning.
- 2. Allergen awareness campaign: seminars to food business operators.

The Food Safety unit will be participating in the 2016 food safety week.

4.17 Food Safety Training for Officers

For the coming year Staff training needs have been identified during an individual appraisal process.

For the previous year the Food Safety Unit manager had responsibility for identifying staff training requirements and make appropriate arrangements for these to be met.

It is the Unit's policy to comply fully with the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 in relation to staff training and the qualifications of authorised officers. This includes access to external training on specialist topics, supplemented by regular in-house update training for authorised food safety officers.

Officers involved in enforcing food safety legislation should therefore receive a minimum of 10 hours continuing professional development training during any year.

Officers involved with food hygiene enforcement in primary production establishments will receive a minimum of 4 hours training relating to their responsibilities during the year.

During 2015/6 all members of staff fulfilled their minimum food safety training obligations. Three members of the Unit achieved a higher certificate in food premises inspection (food standards) at The University of Birmingham.

4.18 Food Safety Formal Action

All enforcement action will be taken having regard to the Public Protection Enforcement Policy. This may range from informal action, through to the service of formal notices including hygiene improvement notices, remedial action notices or hygiene emergency

prohibition notices, or ultimately recommendations for prosecution. The main aim is to ensure that all food businesses within Gwynedd produce food that is safe to eat and that they comply with the requirements of the food safety legislation.

4.19 Safer Food Better Business (SFBB)

To assist proprietors of food businesses in meeting the legal requirements which came into force in January 2006, the FSA introduced a simplified food safety management system, SFBB, that they suggest should be promoted to food businesses that need assistance with hazard analysis requirements.

In 2016-17 we will continue to promote the uptake of this food safety management model (where applicable) within the County of Gwynedd.

4.20 New Businesses

All new food businesses in Gwynedd are subjected to an intervention visit and are provided with advice and guidance to ensure that those businesses are compliant with food safety legislation from the outset.

In 2016-17 we will continue to visit new businesses, undertake interventions and provide advice and guidance to every new business within a target date of 28 days from starting to trade.

There has been a substantial increase in new business registration over the past five years which has placed a substantial added burden on the Food Unit. The table below details the numbers of new business registrations received annually from 2011 onwards;

Year		Number of New Food businesses registered		
2011	76			
2012	111	(+ 46% on previous year)		
2013	183	(+ 65 % on previous year)		
2014	161	(-12% on previous year)		
2015	219	(+36% on previous year)		

The average yearly increase between 2011-15 in food business registrations is + 33.75%.

On this basis the estimated number of new business requiring processing and inspection during 2016 /7 is 293.

5.0 Resources

5.1 Financial Allocation

The tables and pie charts below show the total net cost to Gwynedd Council of undertaking food safety work for 2014/15 (Table 1) and 2015/16 (table 2).

The costs are shown for each element of work and also the amount spent on staffing as a % of the total net cost.

Table 1

Food Safety Element	Net Costs 2014/15
Food Hygiene	£521,152 (£500,305 on staff – 96%)
Food Standards	£69, 836 (£62,154 on staff – 89%)
Food Hygiene at Primary Production	£39,012 (£37841 on staff – 97%)
Total	£630,000

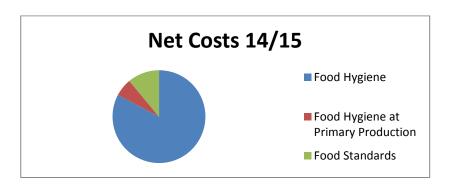
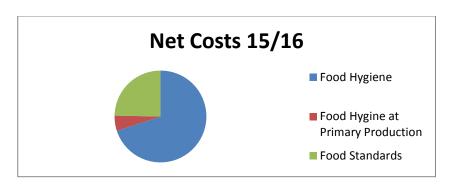


Table 2

Food Safety Element	Net Costs 2015/16	Staff Costs	Travel /Sustenance	Equipment including IT	Legal Costs	Other
Food Hygiene	£442,009	£343,825 (77%)	£3,663 (1%)	£1,847 (1%)		
Food Standards	£156,089	£126,568 (81%)	£377 (1%)	£0		
Food Hygiene at Primary Production	£34,078	£24,731 (73%)	£0	£30 (1%)		
Total	£632,176	£495,124	£4,040	£1,877	£4,405	£126,730



As can be seen the total net cost of the service has increased by £2176 between 14/15 and 15/16. This will decrease for 2016/17 as one full time Public Protection Officer post dealing with food safety issues is being cut.

The change in staffing costs for 2015/16 when compared to 2014/15 in terms of % of the net costs can be attributed to re-structuring of the Public Protection finance arrangements between 2014 and 2016.

5.2 Current Staffing Levels

In 2015/16 there were 14 officers in post within the Food Unit equivalent to 13 FTE. (including a manager but excluding support staff).

A Public Protection Officer had been appointed during August of 2015 to undertake, in part, food safety duties.

All of the officers within the Unit undertake a range work in addition to food safety, commensurate with their authorisations and established competencies. Four members of the trading Standards Service spend a proportion of their time undertaking food safety work.

The tables below details the FTE which were available to the Council during 2015-16 to undertake food safety work.

Food Hygiene

Post	FTE
Environmental Health Officers/Public Protection Officers	4.7
Food Safety Officers/Enforcement Officers	2.7
Food Sampling Officer	0.4

Public Protection Managers (Food and Support)	8.0
Contribution from other posts	0.69
Total	9.29

Food Standards

Post	FTE
Environmental Health Officers/Public Protection Officers	2.55
Food Safety Officers/Enforcement Officers	
Public Protection Managers	
Contribution from other posts	0.14
Total	

Food Hygiene at Primary Production

Post	FTE
Enforcement Officer.	0.1
Public Protection Manager	0.05
Total.	0.15

Gwynedd Council, as all other Authorities in Wales are currently implementing cuts in a bid to maintain core services during a prolonged reduction in Council budgets. As part of the savings programme the Council decided to eliminate one Public Protection Officer Post within the Food Unit during 2016-17. This will happen in July 2016.

This will undoubtedly have a negative effect on the Unit's work. During 2015/16 the Unit could call upon 11.85 FTE to undertake 'operational' food safety work. It was envisaged that with this allocation of FTE in 3 years from (and including) 2015/6 all risk category E (food hygiene) premises would have had an inspection and would then be subject to alternative enforcement.

Similarly, it was expected that the backlog in scheduled food standards interventions at low risk businesses would have been eliminated within 5 years.

With the loss of 1FTE and the allocation of additional health and safety duties to officers within the Food Unit approximately 1.5 FTE previously allocated to food safety enforcement will no longer be available. The timescale for meeting the full code of practice requirements is expected to slip significantly.

To fully comply with the Code of practice (Wales) requirements it is suggested that at least 13 operational FTE should be allocated to the food unit specifically for undertaking food safety work.

6.0 Quality Assurance

6.1 Documented procedures

To ensure the quality and consistency of our service processes, procedures and work instructions are documented and retained electronically. Documented procedures identify responsibility for the work carried out. Documents can be accessed by all staff via a shared Directory.

6.2 Assessment and audits

The quality of our policies and procedures is assessed in a number of ways, namely:

- The Public Protection Manager undertakes regular monitoring of a variety of enforcement work (i.e. inspections, letters, improvement notices, risk rating scores) and provides feedback to the officers. Internal audit of documented procedures and work instructions also takes place as required / annually.
- Internal audits
- Audits undertaken by the Food Standards Agency.

Other monitoring arrangements include

- Customer consultation and feedback via customer satisfaction surveys for relevant areas of the Food Safety Section
- Consideration of corporate complaints and compliments about the service.
- Regular team meetings to give the opportunity to discuss inspection and enforcement issues and to promote general consistency.
- Consistency exercises, especially for risk ratings.
- Peer review exercises.

During the last week in February 2016 the Food Unit was subject to a full audit by the Food Standards Agency.

7.0 Review

7.1 Review Against the Service Plan

The service delivery plan shall be subject to annual review. The review will link into the annual business planning process.

Performance is monitored regularly with a quarterly management review of progress. Quarterly Performance Reports are undertaken detailing performance against National and Local Indicators. Key issues arising in each quarter can then be identified and addressed.

7.2 Review of Performance Against 2015-16 Service Plan

Appendix 1, 2 and 3 provides an analysis of service delivery during 2015-16

The performance of the Service in 2015-16 was good in terms of the achieving 99.1 % of high risk food hygiene and 100% high risk standards inspections. For new businesses, 86% were visited for Food Hygiene within 28 days from starting trading. The target for high risk inspections is 100% and for new businesses, 90%.

At the end of 2015-16. 97.95% of food businesses within Gwynedd were found to be broadly compliant with Food Hygiene legislation.

The other key areas for improvement / action listed in the 15/16 service plan are listed below, together with an explanation of what the Authority has done to meet the requirements set.

Key Area	Actions / Result	
FSA focused Audit of 2014 – remedy issues identified	Improvement programme completed.	
Increase number of food standards interventions undertaken	In 2014-15 522 food standard interventions completed. In 2015-16 612 were completed.	
Expand on Food Hygiene Rating Scheme to include eligible low risk businesses	Done. Some Part E premises have not been rated yet but are to be given priority	
Continue to establish contact with new businesses early in the life of the business	Done, but performance in terms of undertaking timely inspections to be improved.	
Joint working programme for food hygiene and standards	Implemented.	

Encourage primary producers to adopt high	Done, but on a limited scale.
standards of food hygiene practices	

A small number of food hygiene interventions were outstanding for risk category D establishments. These inspections will be completed in quarter one of 2016/17. The outstanding premises were mainly those where access issues had been encountered previously.

A number of food establishments of risk category E are overdue for an intervention. An effort will be made to target these during this year but the reduction in staff is likely to make this challenging. Similarly, there exists a large backlog of interventions due in food standards risk category C premises. An effort will be made to continue to deal with these premises, where resources allow.

7.3 Achievements

In addition to that outlined in Appendix 1, 2 and 3 key service achievements over the period of last year's plan for food hygiene and standards include:

- Participation in the National Food Safety Week using social media as a tool to communicate key messages.
- Similarly, participation in other FSA initiatives such as 'Look Before you Book', Valentine's campaign.
- Achieved 99.1 % of High Risk Food Hygiene Inspections and 100% Food Standards inspections.
- Continuous implementation of the National Food Hygiene Ratings Scheme
- The continued implementation of the FSA Cross Contamination Guidance
- Participation in a North Wales Public Protection Collaboration Project namely cleaning advisory visits for poorly performing premises. Seventeen advisory visits were undertaken.
- Participation in another North Wales Public Protection Collaboration Project.
 Allergen Workshops were held in Dolgellau and Caernarfon for food business operators of ethnic restaurants and takeaways.
- Undertook food safety advisory and enforcement visits in a number of large events held within the County including Festival Number Six, Glass Butter Beach and the Cricceth Food Festival.
- Mailshot to ethic food businesses containing information / guidance relating to the substitution of almonds with peanuts following contraventions identified from formal food samples taken previously from a number of premises.
- Hosted the Food Standards Agency whilst they undertook a full audit of the Food Unit.
- Successful prosecution of two restaurants for non-compliance with

- food hygiene regulations and one also for non-compliance with food standards legislation.
- The number of premises with a food hygiene rating of 4 or 5 in April 2016 was the same as the previous April (2015) at 93%. This shows that the scheme has made a positive impact in terms of improving and maintaining food hygiene standards in Gwynedd. Work continues to address the failings in the 7% of businesses which do not have a good or very good rating.

7.4 Service Delivery for 2016-17

The following areas of service delivery have been identified as a priority for 2016-17: -

- Work identified as necessary following a full audit by the FSA in February 2016.
- Undertake official food hygiene and standards inspection at all high risk premises scheduled for an intervention.
- Increase the number of food standards interventions undertaken.
- Deal with the backlog of overdue hygiene interventions at category E premises and food standards interventions at low risk premises.
- Expand upon the Food Hygiene Rating scheme to include eligible low risk businesses
- Continue to undertake customer satisfaction surveys for relevant food service areas.
- Inspect 90% of new food businesses within 28 days of opening or from the service becoming aware of their trading.
- Joint working programmes for Food Safety and Food Standards will be developed further so that inspections can be undertaken at the same time by one officer.
- Continue to encourage primary producers to adopt high standards of food hygiene practices.
- The enforcement of the Food Hygiene Rating (Promotion of rating) (Wales) regulations 2016 which will come into force on the 28th of November 2016. The regulations require food businesses which supply takeaway food to publish a bilingual statement on their publicity material directing consumers to the FSA food hygiene rating website.
- The requirement to publish Food nutrition information on most pre-packed food labels will become law on the 13th of December 2016. Officer of the Food unit will be required to advise food manufacturers / seller of the new requirements and where necessary, enforce the legislation.

- Monitor and enforce the display of food hygiene rating sticker display within food businesses across the County.
- Ensuring that there is sufficient resource in terms of FTE and competencies in fringe specialised areas of food safety such as shellfish and spring water bottling plants.

7.5 Factors likely to have an impact on service delivery during 2016-17

Factors likely to have impact on service delivery this year include:

- a)The Council has decided to cut two full time posts from the Public ProtectionService in July 2016. Consequently, one full time Health and Safety Officer post and one Public Protection Officer Post with responsibility for Food Hygiene, Standards and Health and Safety Enforcement will be deleted. The work undertaken by officers who currently occupy these posts will be disseminated amongst the rest of the team. Inevitably this will place the team under increased pressure and performance targets may not be met. The end result will be that The Food Unit will struggle to meet the Council's obligations as stipulated in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 during 2016-17.
- b) One member of staff is absent from work until October and another officer is to leave the unit to take up a post elsewhere at the start of July. The post will be filled but invariably this will take some time.
- c) Gaining access to premises. The profile of premises is dynamic and ever changing more so due to the current financial climate. Premises are likely to open less and become more seasonal or open out of normal office hours. There are approximately 350 seasonal food premises in Gwynedd. To manage this, interventions have been programmed such that the due date of seasonal premises have been bought forward pre October. Therefore, the interventions workload is higher over the summer months. Inspection out of normal office hours are likely to increase too. The reduction in staff numbers coincides with this busy period. As things stand the completion of the high risk inspections programme over this quarter and beyond will be difficult to achieve.
- d) Due to the financial climate the number of new businesses are increasing. This is because a number of businesses are not sustainable and therefore are closing and new businesses are opening in their place. This is placing a sustained and significant demand

on the Service. For this year it is estimated that approximately 290 new business will require an inspection, a 34% increase on 2015/16 numbers.

- e) The increasing number of Events in Gwynedd which are high profile e.g. Festival Number 6 and Glass Butter Beach which require proactive and reactive interventions.
- h) The lack of suitably qualified officers to undertake food hygiene interventions at primary producers.
- i)Less staff resource available to deal with an increased workload across a range of disciplines, i.e. Food Hygiene, Food Standards, Health and Safety, Private Water Supply Regulation.
- f) Establishing and maintaining staff competencies and meeting training requirements.
- g) The Food Law Code of Practice Wales is currently being revised. The revised version is likely to contain changes to the qualifications assessment for officers undertaking food law enforcement duties. The revised Code is due to be published in 2016.

APPENDIX 1 – Food Hygiene

PERFORMANCE 2015-16

Food Hygiene Inspection Programme

The performance was satisfactory with 99.1% of High Risk inspections being achieved. The target is 100%. Five high risk inspections were not done within the target date due to access difficulties.

In 2015/6 97.95% of food businesses fell into the Broadly Compliant category for Food Hygiene legislation, a slight increase on the previous year when 97.2% of businesses were broadly compliant.

During the year 215 food premises closed.

The table below details the programmed food hygiene interventions carried out during the year and any outstanding interventions not undertaken at the end of the year.

Risk Category	Achieved	Outstanding
A High Risk	70	0
B High Risk	145	1
C High Risk	747	7
D	260	7
Е	233	195
Unrated	293	25
TOTAL	1748	235

National Food Hygiene Ratings Scheme

Profile of Ratings within Gwynedd - April 2016		
5	Very Good	1396
4	Good	278
3	Generally Satisfactory	78
2	Improvement Necessary	11
1	Major Improvement Necessary	29
0	Urgent Improvement Necessary	1
	Not rated /Excluded / Exempt	208

Number of Requests for Rescore Visit Undertaken - 14, 12 less than the previous year. Number of Appeals on Rating - 7, 5 more than in 2014/5

Other data in relation to Demands on Food Service

Interventions

Inspections and audits	1292
Verification and surveillance	218
Sampling visits	107
Advice and Education	83
Information / intelligence	48
gathering	
TOTAL	1249

Food Complaint Investigations

Food Complaints	51
Hygiene of premises / practices	21
complaints	

Other types of Service Requests

Hygiene Advice to Businesses	563
Tuberculosis Notifications	36
Export Certificates	5
Planning Consultations	4
Shellfish Registration	37
Documents	
Infectious Disease	32
Voluntary Surrender of Food	1
Training course advice	6
Food safety alerts	76

Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

Sporadic Notifications	199
Outbreaks	0

Enforcement Actions

Improvement Notices	15
Remedial Action Notices	2
Written Warnings	972
Voluntary Closure	4
Seizure /detention/Surrender of	1
Food	
Prosecutions concluded	2

Performance on Areas for Improvement

Area of Improvement	Outcome
Maintain the level of food hygiene intervention of high risk premises [ABCs] at 100%	99% of required interventions completed
Maintain customer satisfaction	99% of customers surveyed responded as being satisfied or very satisfied with the Public Protection Service

Appendix 2 – Food Standards

PERFORMANCE 2015-16

Interventions Programme

100% of High Risk inspections were achieved.

The table below details the programmed food standards interventions carried out during the year and any outstanding interventions not undertaken at the end of the year.

Risk Category	Achieved	Outstanding
A High Risk	4	0
B Medium risk	163	233
C Low risk	261	362
Unrated	219	82
Total	647	677

Other data in relation to Demands on FoodStandards Service

Interventions

Inspections and audits	625
Verification and surveillance	13
Sampling visits	4
Advice and Education	5
Information / intelligence	0
gathering	
TOTAL	612

Food Standards Complaint Investigations

Food Complaints	27
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Other types of Service Requests

Allergen alerts	87

Enforcement Actions

Improvement Notices	0
Written Warnings (not	172
combined with hygiene reports)	
Prosecutions concluded	1
Seizure /detention/Surrender of	0
Food	

Performance on Areas for Improvement

Area of Improvement	Outcome
Maintain the level of food hygiene intervention of high risk premises [A] at 100%	Achieved
Maintain customer satisfaction	99% of customers surveyed responded as being satisfied or very satisfied with the Public Protection Service

Appendix 3–Food Hygiene at Primary Producers Performance 2015-16

Inspection programme

Number of inspections completed : 118

Number or reports produced: 118.

No enforcement action was taken.