

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2011/2012

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<p>1.0 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES</p>	
<p>1.1 Aims and Objectives</p>	<p>The Environmental Services Division is committed to ensuring that the highest standards are maintained throughout the district in food premises for which they are the Enforcing Authority, in order to protect both employees and members of the public.</p> <p>Environmental Health staff will adopt an approach to enforcement which will encompass the investigation of cases of food poisoning or suspected food poisoning and food complaints as well as inspections based on risk assessment so as to make effective use of staff resources allocated. Staff will act within the Department's overall enforcement policy but due regard will be had to guidance from recognised bodies. Rochford District Council will take into account the provisions of the Department of Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform's Regulators' Compliance Code when developing policies or principles or in setting standards or giving advice.</p> <p>Education plays an important part in improving food hygiene standards and therefore Environmental Health staff will carry out the activities in this service plan with an educative approach wherever possible.</p>
<p>1.2 Links to Corporate Aims and Plans</p>	<p>This service supports Rochford District Council's Corporate Plan 2009/2013. In particular to work towards the Council's vision "To make Rochford District a place which provides opportunities for the best possible quality of life for all who live, work and visit here"; and to achieve the four corporate objectives: "making a difference to our people, our community, our environment and our local economy".</p> <p>We follow all of the Council's values so as to: "Be open, accountable, listening, responsive, Council"; "Put the customer and citizen at the heart of everything we do; delivering services in a caring and sensitive manner"; "Co-ordinate the management of resources with an emphasis on sustainability"; "Value the contribution of partners, employees and citizens, trusting each other and working collaboratively".</p>

2.0	BACKGROUND	
2.1	Profile of Rochford District	See the website/intranet – www.rochford.uk
2.1.1	Profile of the Environmental Services Division	See the Constitution and the intranet/website.
2.2	Organisational Structure	
2.2.1	Rochford District Council	Please see the Constitution and the intranet/website.
2.2.2	Environmental Services Division	Please see the Constitution and the intranet/website.
2.2.3	Manager responsible for Food Service	Environmental Health Manager.
2.2.4	Specialist Services	Samples for analysis are submitted to a Public Analyst at a laboratory accredited for the purposes for analysis and which appears on the list of official food control laboratories. Samples for examination are submitted to a food examiner at a laboratory accredited for the purpose of examination and which appears on the list of official food control laboratories.
2.3	The Scope of the Food Service	
2.3.1		Establish and maintain an up to date register of all food premises in the district.
2.3.2		Inspect all food premises on a risk based programme in accordance with Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance and take enforcement action as necessary.

2.3.3	Carry out visits and inspections to food premises as necessary within the plan period, including revisits and investigative visits.
2.3.4	Investigate and resolve all food complaints and all complaints relating to a food business, including refuse, pests, drainage etc.
2.3.5	Provide advice and assistance to businesses and consumers on food related issues.
2.3.6	Receive and act on all food alerts.
2.3.7	Investigate all food within the district that might be contaminated or illegally imported and take necessary action. Maintain liaison with Southend Airport and Baltic Wharf in relation to any plans to import food. Seize, detain and destroy, as necessary, unsafe or illegally imported food.
2.3.8	Monitor the movement of unsafe food into and out of the Rochford District area.
2.3.9	Take action to close food premises found to present an imminent risk to health.
2.3.10	Act as consultee in relation to alcohol and entertainment licensing.
2.3.11	Provide advice to the Planning Service on food related issues.
2.3.12	Identify premises processing, handling and storing meat products, meat preparations, minced meat, etc. and prepare them for approval.
2.3.13	Identify premises processing, handling and storing dairy, fish and/or egg products, live bivalve molluscs, etc. and prepare them for approval.
2.3.14	Inspect premises processing, handling and storing food(s) that fall under product-specific regulations and ensure that they comply with such regulations.

2.3.15	Undertake a food sampling programme.
2.3.16	Facilitate food hygiene training as necessary, including by independent training organisations.
2.3.17	Comment on proposed food legislation, codes of practice and other official documents as necessary and as requested.
2.3.18	Provide appropriate export certification as requested by food companies in the district.
2.3.19	Carry out joint food & health and safety inspections of all premises where the risk ratings frequency of due inspections coincides.
2.3.20	Investigate and resolve all serious complaints about health and safety where the sale of food is the main activity.
2.3.21	Receive all reports of accidents where the sale of food is the main activity and investigate as necessary using HELA guidance.
2.3.22	Investigate all reports of a food poisoning or food-borne outbreak.
2.3.23	Offer the Essex Food Liaison Group's Healthy Eating Award.
2.3.24	Operate the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

2.4 Demands on the Food Service

As at 1 April 2011 the Environmental Services' database has identified that it is responsible for enforcing Food Safety in 577 food premises within the Rochford District. According to the Food Law Code of Practice, Risk Categories for these premises can be broken down as follows

<u>Risk Category</u>	<u>Number of Premises</u>	<u>C.O.P. Inspection Frequency</u>
A =	0	6 months
B =	16	12 months
C =	205	18 months
D =	79	2 years
E =	277	3 years
Unrated =	13	

Unrated premises are: new premises where the risk rating will be determined following an inspection.

Following receipt of an updated list of childminders from Essex County Council, a questionnaire is sent to find out the type of catering they provide. Those only providing very low risk food e.g. drink and snacks are not routinely inspected.

Other very low risk premises (some category E) selling small amounts of wrapped confectionary or tinned/bottled food, including chemists, garden centres are reviewed every 3 years but are not routinely inspected,

The number identified as Manufacturing/Distributing premises are	16
The number identified as Retail premises are	165
The number identified as Catering Premises are	383

<p>2.5 Enforcement Policy</p>	<p>As at 1 April 2011, the number of approved premises:</p> <p>Meat /Fishery Products = 2</p> <p>The national indicator for “broadly compliant” food premises has been deleted. As at 1/4/11 the percentage of premises “broadly compliant” was 93%. This indicator is proposed to be replaced with a local indicator based on the number and percentage of food premises in Rochford with a NFHRS score of 3, 4 and 5. This relates to generally satisfactory, good and very good hygiene scores.</p> <p>Food businesses that only operate out of hours are inspected at those times.</p> <p>No particular external factors that may impact on this service have been identified. There are two languages other than English identified as being significant among food handlers and proprietors within the district. These are Bengali and Chinese, however the majority of proprietors are able to speak adequate English or have somebody present at the premises that can translate. In any cases where they may be language difficulties the service would contact Language Direct (020 8539 5142) or Essex Police (01268 775533) for details of an interpreter or use a community interpreting service provided by Medway Council (01634 335578).</p> <p>A number of pamphlets and leaflets on food safety are also available in different languages within the food service at Rochford District. These languages are not seen as placing a particular demand on the food service.</p> <p>This service operates to a documented enforcement policy.</p>
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3.0	SERVICE DELIVERY	
3.1	Inspection Programmes	
3.1.1	Programmed	The number of Programmed Food Hygiene Inspections for the period is = 285
3.1.2	Carry Over	The number of Programmed Food Hygiene Inspections carried over from the last financial year is = 7 .
3.1.3	Total	Therefore the total number of Programmed Food Hygiene Inspections for the period is = 292 . (See Appendix 1 for a breakdown)
3.1.4	Target	The target for this year is to achieve: All Categories = 99%
3.1.5	Revisits	The estimated number of revisits for this plan period is = 50 .
3.1.6	Non-Programmed inspections	The estimated number on non-programmed inspections is = 75 .
3.1.7	NFHRS	The estimated percentage of premises that have an NFHRS rating and score of 3, 4 and 5 will be 80% .
3.2	Food Complaints	All food complaints received including anonymous complaints are investigated in accordance with the good enforcement principle of targeting, transparency, consistency and proportionality. The estimated number for this plan period is = 50 . The initial response time is 5 working days. The target is to achieve: 80% . The resolution time is 6 weeks. The target is to achieve: 80% .

<p>3.3 Home Authority Principle</p>	<p>There are no formal Home Authority Agreements set up for any food business within Rochford District. The Council is not the originating Authority for any manufacturing business which distributes their products nationwide. Advice on standards is provided to other Councils following complaints made to them about purchases made from outlets outside Rochford District.</p>
<p>3.4 Advice to Business</p>	<p>Advice is provided to existing or proposed food businesses, members of the public, other Council Service Departments and other persons. Advice is mainly person-to-person whilst Officers are carrying out visits/inspections but may also be following a telephone call or letters to the Environmental Services Division.</p> <p>Officers aim to give advice in accordance with recognised guidance and codes of practice, and a range of advisory leaflets is available.</p> <p>The estimated number for the plan period is = 65.</p> <p>The initial response time is 5 working days. The target is to achieve: 80% (estimate).</p> <p>The resolution time is 6 weeks. The target is to achieve: 80% (estimate).</p> <p>The Council has regular meetings with the Chamber of Trade and Federation of Small Businesses, who have been consulted on the Division's Enforcement Policy. The Council invites all businesses to regular breakfast meetings when any topic can be discussed, including food safety.</p>
<p>3.5 Food Sampling</p>	<p>Food sampling for microbiological contamination is carried out in accordance with the Public Health Laboratory Service /Essex Food Group Sampling Programme and taking account of current food premises.</p> <p>The estimated number of samples to be taken for this period is = 100.</p>

<p>3.6 Outbreak Control and Inspection Disease Control</p>	<p>It is estimated that there will be no charge from the Health Protection Agency Eastern, Chelmsford Food, Water and Environmental Laboratory Service to analyse this number of samples.</p> <p>The service also enables officers in the food team to carry out random sampling of foods where it is felt necessary. This may occur following a programmed or otherwise visit to food premises or via a food complaint received by the service.</p> <p>Food complaint samples are analysed by a Public Analyst or examined by a food examiner (the Health Protection Agency Laboratory at Colindale or an entomologist) if necessary.</p> <p>It is estimated that 8 food complaint samples will be submitted for analysis or examination, and provision in the budget has been made.</p> <p>Food poisoning notifications and outbreaks are investigated within one working day of receipt in accordance with the Control of Communicable Disease Joint Plans of Essex Local Health Protection Team and Essex Local Authorities and following guidance in the Communicable Disease Guidelines dated December 2004.</p> <p>The estimated number of notifications requiring investigation for this period is = 120.</p> <p>The estimated number of outbreaks is = 1.</p>
<p>3.7 Food Alerts</p>	<p>Food alerts are handled in accordance with Food Law Code of Practice.</p> <p>The food safety service has facilities to receive food alerts by an electronic mail system as required by the Code of Practice.</p> <p>The estimated number of food alerts received for this period is = 50.</p>

<p>3.8 Liaison</p>	<p>A number of arrangements have been made to improve the consistency of enforcement with neighbouring Authorities.</p> <p>This service actively supports the Essex Environmental Health Management Group's Food Group and the Food Study Group</p> <p>Investigations of suspected food poisoning outbreaks are carried out either jointly or in close contact with the Consultants in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC) for Essex. The service also advises and liaises with other services within Rochford District Council, including: Building Control, Planning, the Environmental Protection Team and the Licensing Team.</p> <p>The service is consulted on planning applications involving food premises.</p>
<p>3.9 Food Safety Promotion</p>	<p>Food safety promotion on cooking turkeys and barbecues is carried out during the autumn and spring respectively. Leaflets are made available at the 2 Council offices, community centres, butchers, etc., and are given to food poisoning cases. As appropriate, articles on food safety matters are included in Rochford District Matters and the internet, and released to the press.</p> <p>Advisory leaflets on food safety are sent or given to all persons suffering from food poisoning following receipt of a notification.</p> <p>The service participates in the National Food Safety Week by organising a poster competition.</p> <p>A food sampling advisory leaflet with advice on microbiological standards and food safety is sent following an acceptable or unsatisfactory sampling result with a link to the Council's food website.</p>

<p>3.10 Export Certification</p> <p>3.11 Essex Food Liaison Group's Healthy Eating Award</p> <p>3.12 Scores on the Doors (NFHRS)</p>	<p>Comprehensive food safety information is available on Rochford District Council's website, and a letter was sent to all food businesses when the website was created.</p> <p>Food hygiene advice is sent to all new childminders on the Council's database and from information supplied by ECC Childrens Information Service.</p> <p>The service will continue to promote the use of Safer Food Better Business (SFBB), a simple free documented food safety management system prepared by the Food Standards Agency (FSA).</p> <p>Export certificates for manufacturers within the district exporting various foods are provided.</p> <p>The estimated number of certificates requested during this period is 0.</p> <p>The estimated number of the Essex Food Liaison Group's Healthy Eating Awards granted is 1.</p> <p>The service will operate the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (NFHRS), which is a scheme allowing the public to view the latest assessment of food hygiene standards.</p>
<p>4.0 RESOURCES</p> <p>4.1 Financial Allocation</p>	<p>The overall total estimated expenditure for the Environmental Health service is £636,600 which includes the food service costs such as staffing, travel and subsistence, equipment including investment in IT.</p> <p>A budget of £20,000 is provided for engaging a food contractor to carry out planned inspections. This is included in the overall total expenditure.</p>

<p>4.2 Staffing Allocation</p>	<p>The Health Protection Agency allocated Essex Authorities a sampling budget. This amount has been divided between Essex authorities. Rochford's allocation is 4,000 credits, although credits can be exchanged. Samples can be submitted to these allocations without Councils being charged.</p> <p>Details of the budget for salaries, travel, subsistence, consultancy, and analytical fees are contained in Rochford District Council's Budget Book 2011/2012.</p> <p>No budget is separately allocated for prosecutions or legal action taken as a result of action under this service, but this is provided for within the Legal Service's budget.</p> <p>The Environmental Health service is being restructured within the life of this Service Plan with the proposed professional and technical staff being 1 Environmental Health Manager, 2 Principal EHO's, 2 Senior EHO's, 1 Senior Licensing Officer, 2 Senior EHTO's and 1 modern apprentice. Of these 1 PEHO, 1 SEHO, 1 SEHTO and a contracted EHO are involved in the direct provision of the Food Safety Service. In addition administrative support is provided from a central administration unit.</p> <p>It should be noted that the staff directly providing the Food Safety Service do not work solely on Food Safety. These officers also carry out the Health and Safety, Licensing, Outbreak Control and Infectious Disease, Skin Piercing Registration, Sunday Trading and Smokefree and Internal Health and Safety duties.</p> <p>Nonetheless, it is estimated that the above staffing levels will provide sufficient resources to carry out the service delivery outlined in Paragraph 3.0.</p> <p>It is estimated that 2.3 full time equivalents of professional and technical staff (including the contractor) work on food safety.</p>
<p>4.3 Staff Development Plan</p>	<p>This service supports the Corporate Aims for Rochford District Council. The staff covering this service will continue to be encouraged, motivated and trained to develop their potential and use their talents for the benefit of the people of the district.</p>

	<p>This service identifies training and development needs by an annual performance and development review of all staff.</p> <p>The training budget is allocated primarily to those staff in the whole service that are identified as requiring further training to develop their professional and technical skills for the job that they are required to carry out and to deliver Corporate Objectives.</p> <p>Budget provision is also available for minor, short ad hoc training courses.</p> <p>For this plan period, the following training needs have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short ad hoc courses when they become available <p>Cascade training is provided by the officer attending an external training course to other officers in the service.</p> <p>Periodic meetings are organised to discuss matters and issues of consistency arising under this service plan area.</p> <p>Minutes of the Essex Environmental Health Management Group's Food Group and the Food Study Group are circulated to officers in the food service.</p> <p>The Environmental Service and the Council supports Environmental Health Officers that wish to obtain Chartered Status of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (C.I.E.H) by taking the Assessment of Professional Development (APD).</p>
	<p>All EHOs that are members of the C.I.E.H. are required to undergo at least 20 hours of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) per year, and chartered members 30 CPD hours per year. Whilst officers are responsible for monitoring the amount they have done in a year the service recognises this need and supports staff in achieving the minimum amount required by the CPD scheme. In house training may be organised throughout the year by individuals.</p>

Every officer authorised to carry out food hygiene inspections and enforcement will receive structured on-going training, which may take the form of in house training, formal visits or vocational visits. The minimum ongoing/update training is 10 hours per year and is recorded.

Officers who have not enforced food law for some time are put through structured revision training before resuming food law enforcement duties. The minimum revision training is 15 hours and is recorded.

Officers returning to food law enforcement duties after an absence of more than 3 years are monitored by a more senior officer experienced in food law enforcement for a minimum period of 3 months.

5.0 QUALITY ASSESSMENT	
5.1 New Officers	<p>Before new officers undertake food law enforcement duties independently, they are supervised and monitored by a more senior officer experienced in food law enforcement for up to 3 months.</p>
5.2 Peer Reviews	<p>The following peer reviews are carried out:</p> <p><u>Contractor</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All letters are checked for compliance with codes of practise and guidance, and to determine the need for a revisit; ➤ All computer inspection documents are checked for accuracy of the risk rating and to agree when a rating has been reduced; ➤ All reports of inspections are checked for accuracy; ➤ 1 full audit using the Section's "Management Quality Audit Form" is carried out on a completed inspection every other month. This involves a desktop check and a visit. Therefore, 6 audits are to be carried out for the period. The contractor will carry out approximately 120 high risk inspections. Therefore the audit rate is $(6/120)*100=5.0\%$. <p><u>Staff – Food EHOs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A full audit using the Section's "Management Quality Audit Form" is carried out on 2 high risk inspections. This involves a desktop check and a visit.
5.3 Documented Procedures	<p>This service operates to 21 documented standard operating procedures covering all aspects of food work, including inspections, complaint, notices, closure, prosecution, food alerts. These procedures are to be reviewed annually.</p>
5.4 Customer Care Survey	<p>Food businesses are included in the Environmental Health business satisfaction surveys.</p>

<p>5.5 Audit</p>	<p>A third party audit of the food service was carried out by a contractor on 13 December 2006. The Executive Summary of the report states that the audit identified a high level of compliance with the national standard throughout most areas. Inspections of food premises were undertaken at a minimum frequency required by the Food Standards Agency and appeared to include thorough assessments of businesses compliance with relevant food law. Detailed records relating to the inspection of premises and investigation of complaints were being maintained by officers and responses to cases of infectious disease notified to the authority were undertaken in a thorough manner. Our database was found to be accurate with appropriate arrangements in place to protect it from corruption and to keep it up to date.</p> <p>The next audit is planned to take place during 2011/2012.</p> <p>On 26 November 2008, the Food Standards Agency carried out an audit on the Council's use of contractors for doing food hygiene inspections. A very favourable report was received, with no issues or recommendations.</p> <p>The audit was part of the Food Standards Agency's national focused programme covering the use of contractors and consultants by local authorities for food work.</p>
<p>6.0 REVIEW</p> <p>6.1 Review against the service plan</p>	<p>An annual review against the service plan is carried out.</p> <p>In addition, performance is monitored monthly and a quarterly report is submitted to Members.</p> <p>The review below is for the plan period financial year 2010-2011.</p>

6.1.1	Food Hygiene Inspections	<p>The target for the last plan period was to achieve 99% of programmed inspections. The actual percentage achieved was 98%. The total number of programmed inspections carried out was 279 (the original estimate was 311 but 25 premises closed giving rise to a programme of 286) The total number of inspections (including non-programmed) carried out was 304</p>
6.1.2	Revisits	<p>The number of revisits actually found to be required was 45 (estimate 75).</p>
6.1.3	Service Request	<p>The number of service requests (food complaints and advice to businesses) received was 139 (estimate 120).</p>
6.1.4	Food Sampling	<p>The number of food samples taken was 91 (estimate 150), a situation which arose as a result of staff sickness. The reduction was offset on a County-wide basis by increased sampling by the other authorities.</p>
6.1.5	Outbreak control and infectious disease control	<p>The number of notifications received requiring investigation was 128 (estimate 120). The number of outbreaks was 0 (estimate 1).</p>
6.1.6	Food Alerts	<p>The number of food alerts received was 41 (estimate 50).</p>
6.1.7	Export Certificates	<p>The number of export certificates issued was 0 (estimate 0).</p>
6.1.8	Notices	<p>The following number of 'notices' were issued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - informal written warning letters - Improvement Notices served: 4. - Prohibition notices served: 0.
6.1.9	Closures, Prosecutions and Formal Cautions	<p>The number of emergency closures was 0.</p>

	The number of prosecutions was 0 .
	The number of simple cautions was 1
6.1.10 Food Safety Promotion	All food safety promotion activities were carried out.
6.1.11 Financial Allocation	Approximately £13,000 (estimate £18,000) was spent engaging a food contractor to carry out planned inspections.
6.2 Identification of any variation from the service plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A formal audit of the Food Hygiene Inspection Service was not carried out because of demands of other work and staff changes 2. An annual review of all the 21 documented procedures was not carried out because of demands of other work and staff changes.
6.3 Areas of improvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A formal audit of the Food Hygiene Inspection Service needs to be carried out in accordance with 5.5 of this plan. Action: An audit of Rochford's Food Hygiene Inspection Service will be carried out during 2011/12. 2. A review of all the 21 documented procedures needs to be carried out. Action: A review of the 21 documented procedures will be carried out during 2011/12.

PROGRAMMED FOOD HYGIENE INSPECTIONS**1.04.11 TO 31.03.12**

Risk Category	Number of Inspections
A	0
B	36
C	148
D	35
E	80
New businesses	12
Total	311