

Cabinet – 9 June 2010

The Public Safety Food Law Enforcement Plan for the year 2010/11

Portfolio: Councillor Zahid Ali - Communities and Partnerships

Service: Public Safety

Wards: All

Key decision: No

Forward plan: No

1. Summary of report

- 1.1 Through the work of its Environmental Health and Trading Standards Divisions the Public Safety service ensures that food produced, prepared or sold in the Borough is safe and without risks to health, is correctly labelled and meets appropriate standards. The Food Law Enforcement Plan, attached as **Appendix A**, explains how the work of these Divisions seeks to achieve this.
- 1.2 The proposed Plan describes enforcement of statutory controls and the monitoring of food, premises and personnel in a structured manner and outlines the development of continuous improvement of services and initiatives to influence and improve food hygiene and food standards to address local and national priorities.
- 1.3 The Plan will also be used as the basis for any inspection or audit by the Food Standards Agency in their role of ensuring that activities are undertaken in an effective and consistent manner and as it forms part of the Council's Policy Framework it is therefore required to be approved by Council.

2. Recommendations

That the Public Safety Food Law Enforcement Plan for the year 2010/11 be referred to Council for approval.

3. Background information

- 3.1 As part of its powers under the Food Standards Act 1999 to monitor and audit Local Authorities enforcement activities, the Food Standards Agency requires Local Authorities to produce a Food Law Enforcement Plan which identifies its strategy and the resources required to fulfil its Food Safety function each year.

- 3.2 The Food Law Enforcement Plan is one of the Strategic plans included within the Council's Policy Framework and as such must be approved by the full council.
- 3.3 The Food Law Enforcement Plan sets out the Council's commitment to Food Safety Enforcement for the year ahead. The plan also records the outturn against last year's work programme.
- 3.4 The Food Standards Agency has issued guidance on the format and production of such plans to ensure that national priorities and standards are addressed. Officers have followed the relevant guidance in the production of this Plan.
- 3.5 The Plan includes information about the service as well as demonstrating a balance between enforcement action and education of traders.
- 3.6 The provision of safe food is a fundamental principle of protecting public health and is consistent with other policy priorities including economic success, improving the quality of our environment, creating opportunity and potential, staying safe, improving health and working smarter.

4. Resource considerations

- 4.1 **Financial:** The Food Law Enforcement Plan acknowledges that savings must be achieved to contribute to the Corporate financial position and this has led to the deletion of a vacant Environmental Health Officer post. Consequently, there has been a reduction in the number of hours of officer time available to fulfil the requirements of the Plan when compared to previous years.
- 4.1.1 The Division is to be reorganised both structurally and thematically and this will lead to closer supervision of workloads and priority areas of work. It is therefore considered that apart from a major issue that may occur in the future, at this stage we will be able to complete the Plan within the resources available.

	Budget 09/10	Actual 09/10	Budget 10/11
Staffing	279832	265447	259379
Support Services	3492	3569	3404
Supplies & Services	10209	9981	9057
Transport Costs	13645	12147	13918
Income	(2667)	(4102)	(2667)
Net Expenditure	304511	287042	283091

These figures exclude FRS17, Insurance, Management and Admin.

- 4.2 **Legal:** The Food Standards Act 1999 gives power to the Food Standards Agency to audit and monitor local authorities to ensure effectiveness and consistency. The work of the Division pertinent to this report is undertaken pursuant to the provisions of the Food Safety Act 1990 and associated codes of practice, the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 and any other such regulations developing from the European Communities Act 1992

- 4.3 **Staffing:** As part of the budget savings process one vacant Environmental Health Officer post has been deleted and therefore the work, as contained within this plan, will be undertaken with a lesser resource than in previous years.

5. **Citizen impact**

- 5.1 The Council is committed to achieving its priorities of improving the quality of the environment, economic success, creating opportunity and potential, staying safe, improving health and working smarter. The work of the Environmental Health and Trading Standards services not only safeguards public health but is also intended to encourage businesses to invest in their processes and staff making them economically more viable and in turn strengthening the communities in which they trade.
- 5.2 Where businesses do not invest in safe practices and act in a way that harms public health or puts other businesses at an economic disadvantage the Council should intervene and take robust action.

6. **Community Safety**

By attaining the targets set out within the Plan, the Council should be able to maintain standards within the majority of the establishments for which it is responsible. Working with partner agencies, acting on concerns raised by the public or commercial sectors and acting swiftly in areas on legal non compliance should give communities a feeling of well being and confidence in the food they eat both locally and in terms of nationwide outlets.

7. **Environmental impact**

Through the provision of good quality and safe food and the adequate control of the cooking and waste disposal processes, businesses should have a beneficial rather than detrimental impact on the environment in which they trade.

8. **Performance and risk management issues**

The Plan sets out the targets for the year ahead. Through the regular reviews that are built into the service planning process any performance issues can be identified and acted upon before they have a detrimental effect on service delivery.

9. Equality implications

These proposals seek to benefit all parts of the community equally and will be consistently applied across the Borough. However, food sampling programmes and support for local businesses will reflect local needs and where there are food businesses or consumers with particular language, cultural or other needs these can be addressed with reference to good practice that is shared amongst local authorities within the West Midlands and also nationwide.

10. Consultation

The Environmental Health Division carries out customer satisfaction surveys every month to gauge how satisfied businesses are with the way in which they have been treated by officers. The Division is also part of the West Midlands Food Liaison Group consisting of representatives from the seven West Midlands authorities and where good practice, principles of enforcement and education and joint or collaborative work are discussed. Upon approval of the Plan, it will be uploaded onto the Authority's website and made available for public comment. Food standards sampling programmes are also subject to local consultation.

Background papers

Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement

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26 May 2010

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26 May 2010



Walsall Council

Public Safety

Food Law Enforcement

Service Plan 2010/11

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1.0 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of Walsall Council's food regulatory service are shown in the table immediately below.

AIMS OF THE FOOD REGULATORY SERVICE
To protect public health by ensuring that high standards of food safety are maintained in food premises and food production by means of education and enforcement
To enforce and ensure compliance with Food Safety legislation.
To ensure food offered or exposed for sale is fit for human consumption and to expedite the removal of hazardous/high risk products from the food chain
To monitor the quality and availability of food and water and reduce avoidable illness and disease
To work to prevent avoidable illness and reduce the spread of communicable disease within the Borough
OBJECTIVES OF THE FOOD REGULATORY SERVICE
To carry out a programme of routine inspections of food premises.
To ensure that food offered or exposed for sale is fit for human consumption and to expedite the removal of hazardous/high risk products from the food chain.
To investigate where appropriate cases of communicable disease, including the investigation of practices and processes identified as sources of infection at commercial premises
To investigate service requests relating to food and the conditions of food premises and where appropriate prepare reports for prosecution
To implement procedures to ensure compliance with the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement.
To produce and undertake a food sampling programme and to undertake reactive sampling as required in connection with outbreaks/service requests.
To ensure that all food service work is carried out in accordance with relevant codes of practice, quality systems and the service's enforcement policy.
To respond to requests for advice, and where appropriate liaise and advise businesses in accordance with The LACORS home authority principle.

1.2 LINKS TO CORPORATE OBJECTIVES AND PLANS

The Council publishes a Corporate Plan each year as a key element of its performance framework. The plan sets out the council's vision for the borough, its aims and objectives and its strategic priorities for the year ahead.

The Corporate Plan is agreed by all elected Members at full Council and informs the individual plans for each cabinet portfolio. These portfolio plans set out the objectives of the Members of Cabinet for the areas within their own remit and are supported by service action plans which detail the specific activities that officers will be undertaking within the year to help deliver these objectives.

The plan reflects the Council's contribution to the work of the Walsall Partnership as a reflection of the Sustainable Community Strategy for the borough, and the Local Area Agreement which will take it forward. All of these support the design and delivery of its services, corporately and at directorate, service and team levels.

The vision for the borough of Walsall is set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and is that "Walsall will be a great place to live, work and invest, where

- people get on well with one another
- people can get around easily and safely
- people support and look after one another
- there are more and better jobs for local people
- people can live an independent and healthy life
- there is a wide range of facilities for people to use and enjoy
- people consider the impact of what we do now on
- future generations
- there exist high-quality and distinctive designs of buildings
- and spaces
- growing up is as good as it can be and young people fulfil
- their potential
- people are our strength and have the skills and attitude
- required by employers
- everyone has the chance to live in a home fit for their
- purpose and fit for the future
- people feel proud to live.

The Vision provides a clear focus for the planning of Council services and the allocation of resources. The Corporate Plan also sets out priorities that have been developed so that the Council focuses its efforts, resources and activities on this vision. For 2010/11 these priorities are:

- Improving health
- Reducing crime and feeling safe
- Developing strong and dynamic communities
- Improving education and skills
- Improving housing choice
- Improving the quality of our environment
- Reducing worklessness and creating opportunity and potential
- Increasing enterprise and making Walsall a vibrant borough
- Working smarter

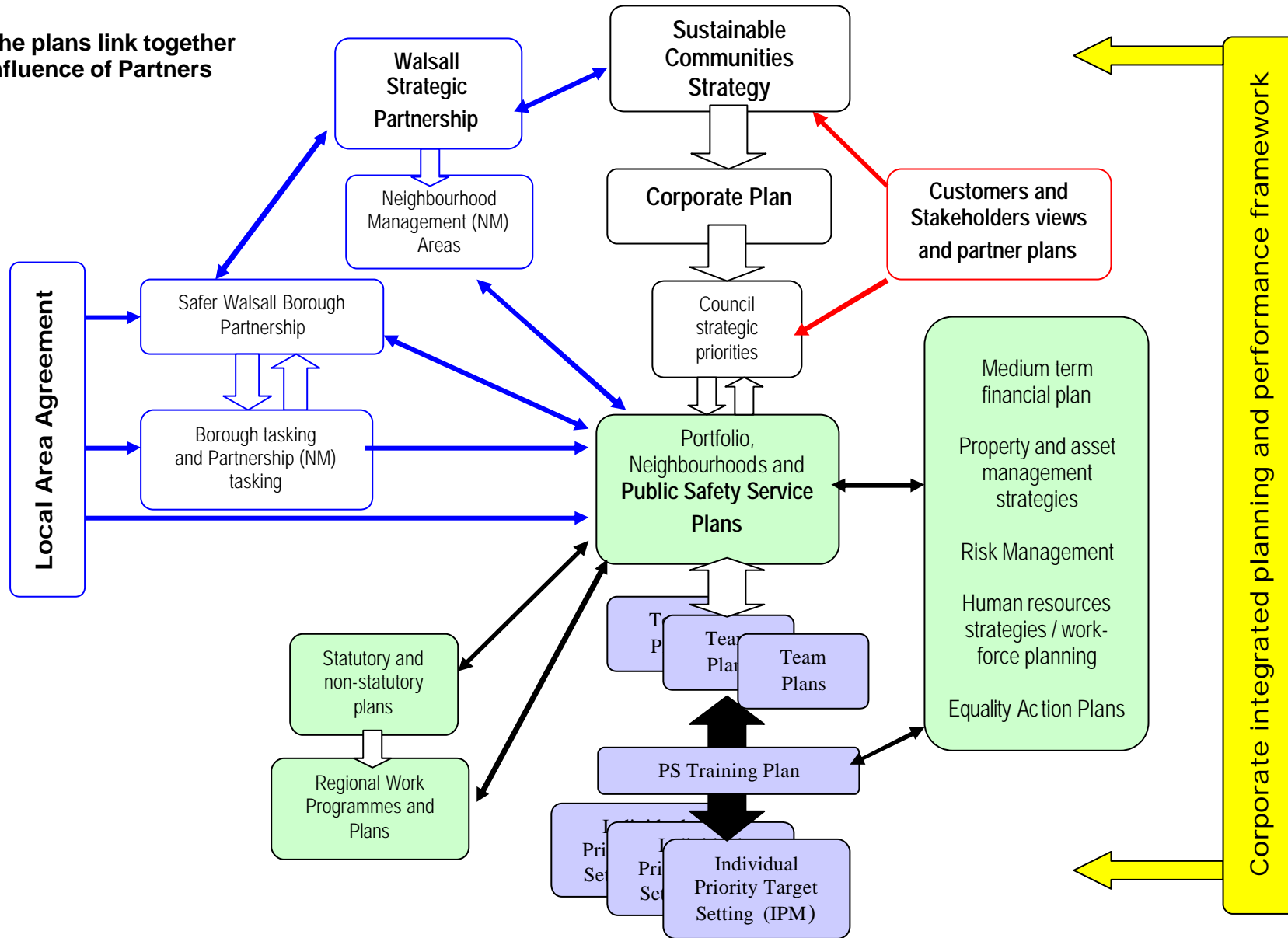
These priorities provide a focus for the whole council – the decisions that are taken, and the actions that are taken as a result by each of our directorates, and the services, teams, and individual members of staff working within them. The Food Service directly supports and contributes to the priorities in the Corporate Plan, the themes, values and objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy by ensuring the provision of the following:

- Strengthening public safety enforcement and ensuring business compliance to offer a greater level of reassurance and safeguard the health and well being of communities.

1.3 HIERARCHY OF PLANS

The Food Service planning process will take account of the need to establish clear links between the individual contributions of employees through to the high level strategic aspirations of the Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy. The following diagram illustrates the hierarchy of plans.

How the plans link together and Influence of Partners



2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 PROFILE OF WALSALL MBC

Walsall is the northern-most of the Boroughs in the Black Country region and consists of six towns with a total population of 254,500 (2007 mid-year estimate) and an area of about 10364 hectares. One side of the Borough is bordered by similar Metropolitan Districts while the other side is bordered by the rural Shire Districts of Staffordshire.

The western side of the Borough is a mixture of industrial and residential areas although much of the traditional heavy engineering has gone, being replaced by light engineering and service industries. A good deal of the housing stock in this area pre-dates 1950; much of it was municipally owned and has recently been the subject of a large scale voluntary transfer to five Housing Trusts.

The eastern side of the Borough is much greener with substantial public open space, agricultural land and some light industry. Despite the presence of a number of dairy cattle there are no milk processing plants in the Borough and no sales of untreated milk or milk products. Housing in this side of the Borough tends to be more modern predominantly privately owned and better maintained than in the West.

Walsall has a variety of manufacturing and service industries many of whose employees commute into the Borough. It is an operational base for a number of food wholesalers and has several companies producing a variety of food products which are distributed throughout the UK. Of an overall total of 2085 food businesses registered within the Borough, 3 businesses are large-scale manufacturers, manufacturing bread and associated products, and meat products. There are 75 butchers premises and 16 premises approved to produce products of animal origin for distribution throughout the UK and Europe. Most other businesses are either engaged in the retail or wholesale selling of products prepared or manufactured elsewhere in the UK or abroad. The Local Authority does not have any seasonally based food manufacturing or service areas. There is one small-scale Halal poultry slaughterer operating throughout the year; food safety enforcement in this premises is undertaken by the Food Standards Agency. There are no red meat slaughterhouses. There are six registered agricultural feeding stuffs establishments.

The Borough is ethnically diverse, with 14% of Walsall's inhabitants coming from minority ethnic communities. In some wards, up to 70% of the population are from BME groups. Many people in these communities either own, or are employed in, small food businesses.

2.2 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

A detailed organisational structure is not yet available as at the time of writing this Service Plan Public Safety is undergoing an organisational re-structure. However, the new Public Safety service, which reports to the Head of Public Safety, seeks to integrate the following services operating within a neighbourhood management framework of 6 community areas:

- Environmental Health
- Trading Standards and Licensing
- Community Safety
- Resilience (incorporating Emergency Planning CCTV monitoring and surveillance)

2.3 SCOPE OF THE FOOD SERVICE

The enforcement of food related legislation is a joint responsibility between Environmental Health and Trading Standards, the former dealing with safety issues and the latter with standards and labelling. All services are provided by the Authority's own Officers.

The **Environmental Health** service provides the following services:

1. Food safety / hygiene inspections
2. Infectious disease investigations, (including food poisoning)
3. Microbiological food sampling
4. Food safety advice incorporating Safer Food Better Business
5. Food complaint and hygiene complaint investigations
6. Promotional and educational activities and initiatives based around food safety and hygiene

The Health and Safety function is delivered alongside the Food Safety service.

The **Trading Standards** service provides the following services:

1. Food standards inspections (including feedingstuffs inspections)
2. The investigation of complaints in relation to food labelling and composition
3. Food and feedingstuff sampling for compositional and labelling conformity
4. The investigation of complaints in relation to composition and labelling of animal feed and feedingstuffs
5. Food standards advice

The full range of Trading Standards legislation is delivered alongside the food standards service.

DELIVERY OF THE FOOD REGULATORY SERVICE	
Service Delivery Point	Challenge Building, Hatherton Road, Walsall. WS1 1YG
Hours of Opening	Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5.15pm Friday 8.45pm to 4.45pm
Telephone numbers	01922 652210
E mail	foodsafety@walsall.gov.uk trading_standards@walsall.gov.uk
Website	www.walsall.gov.uk

2.4 DEMANDS ON THE FOOD SERVICE

Profile of Food Premises – April 2010

RISK CATEGORY	A	B	C	D	E	F	OTHER	TOTAL
NO. OF PREMISES	54	251	944	284	248	0	304	2085

FOOD CATEGORY	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	TOTAL
NO. OF PREMISES	7	0	31	1	0	46	644	1323	4	29	2085

*National Food Category Descriptions

A	Primary Producer	F	Distributor
B	Slaughterhouse	G	Retailer
C	Manufacturer	H	Caterer
D	Packer	I	Materials Supplier
E	Importer/Exporter	J	Manufacturing Retailer

Each year the service deals with approximately:

- 1066 inspections
- 220 requests for service
- 123 telephone enquiries

Appendix 1 to this document provides a breakdown of the demands on the Food Service in terms of staff resources.

2.5 ENFORCEMENT POLICIES.

An Enforcement Policy is in place for Public Safety which has been approved by full Council and which is currently subject to review. Below is the link to the Enforcement Policy on the Walsall MBC web site. http://www.walsall.gov.uk/enforcement_policy The policies are in line with the Enforcement Concordat produced by the Government. The basic principles are:

- setting standards
- openness
- helpfulness
- proportionality
- consistency

3.0 SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 FOOD PREMISES – HYGIENE INSPECTIONS

The Authority follows the priority rating system identified in the Food Safety Code of Practice and aims to inspect 100% of high and medium risk premises every year.

An inspection involves assessing the knowledge of the food business operator, assessing practices and procedures in place as well as conducting a physical inspection of the premises.

Inspection Profile for the Year Beginning 1st April 2010

RISK CATEGORY	A	B	C	D	E	U	TOTAL
NUMBER OF PREMISES	54	251	944	284	248	304	2085
INSPECTIONS SCHEDULED	108	251	589	108	10	0	1066

Category A premises are those with the highest risk, whether by the nature of the activities carried on there, or because of poor operating conditions. The minimum inspection frequency for the different categories of premises is given below. Individual businesses are inspected more frequently than this where required. We use a purposefully designed database for logging and tracking our inspections and other activities.

CATEGORY	MINIMUM FREQUENCY OF VISITS
A	6 months
B	12 months
C	18 months
D	2 years
E	Alternative inspection strategy every 3 years

Revisions in the Code of Practice give us the opportunity to deal with low risk premises by means other than an inspection. We will continue to develop our strategy to these premises through the year.

Revisits are made where there are immediate concerns about food safety. The Environmental Health Division has a structured risk based criteria to enable revisits to be prioritised. This was formulated through the West Midlands Food Liaison Group

It is our policy to issue Hygiene Improvement Notices if there are serious concerns about food safety during a current visit. These legal notices ensure that improvements are made within a reasonable timescale negotiated with the food business operator.

A Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice will be served where there is an imminent risk of injury to health: This will involve the immediate closure of the premises. Common reasons for closing premises are the discovery of pest infestations (mice, cockroaches), the absence of water/hot water; or very poor control over food hazards and/or cleaning. Voluntary closure measures are also available but this course of action must be instigated by the Food Business Operator.

NUMBER OF FORMAL ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2009/10	
Number of premises where Hygiene Improvement Notices were served	20
Number of premises where Emergency Prohibition Notices were served	3
Number of premises where a Voluntary Closure was accepted	0
Prosecutions against businesses for poor conditions	2
Number of premises subject to surrender of food	1
Formal Cautions issued against businesses for food safety and hygiene offences	0

3.2 PROSECUTIONS 2009/10

Kafil Uddin, Bengal Lancer, 46 Spring Lane, High Heath, Pelsall, Walsall, WS4 1AT.

The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006

Poor standards of cleaning and failure to have a Food Safety Management System:

1. Failure to keep the premises clean and maintained in good repair and condition.
2. Failure to keep walls in sound condition.
3. Failure to keep articles, fittings and equipment clean and maintained in good repair and condition.
4. Failure to have adequate provision for storage and disposal of food waste
5. Failure to wear suitable clean protective clothing
6. Failure to put in place a Food Safety Management System.

Fines:

Offence 1 - £75

Offence 2 - £75

Offence 3 - £75

Offence 4 - £75

Offence 5 - £75

Offence 6 - £75

Total = £450

Costs - £954.57 awarded to the Authority.

Khawaja Food Store, 104 Stafford Street, Walsall. WS2 8DX
Court Date 11th June 2009
The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006

Food was not protected against any contamination likely to render the food unfit for human consumption, injurious to health or contaminated in such a way that it would be unreasonable to expect it to be consumed in that state.

Fine: £1500

Costs: £307.20

3.3 FOOD HYGIENE: NEW INITIATIVES FOR 2010/11

Primary Authority Partnership

Primary Authority will ensure that any company trading across Council boundaries is guaranteed access to robust and reliable advice about its regulatory responsibilities. The advice will be provided through the creation of new legal partnerships with local regulators. These registered primary authorities will liaise with other councils to ensure that inspection and enforcement action taken anywhere in the UK reflects the advice given.

A Primary Authority can also work with its business to produce a national inspection plan, giving guidelines to other councils to avoid unnecessary checks and tests. Primary Authority partnerships can cover the full range of regulatory services or specific functions, such as Health and WSafety, Food Safety or Product Labelling.

The scheme also provides a safety net to ensure that local authorities communicate early, agree a regulatory approach and are consistent and coordinated in the way they regulate. Before a Local Authority starts imposing sanctions it must check to see whether a company has acted in accordance with the advice given, reducing unwarranted legal action.

Walsall Council has not received any requests to form a Primary Authority Partnership.

Scores on the Doors

It is very important that all food businesses obey the law and supply food that is safe to eat. Consumers in certain areas can already see how well a food business in their area complies with food hygiene regulations through 'Scores on the Doors' schemes run by their Local Authority.

The Food Standards Agency is to introduce a national scheme so that consumers across the UK can obtain information on businesses in their areas. The primary purpose of these 'Scores on the Doors' schemes is to empower consumers so that they make more informed choices about the places from which they purchase food.

Local Authority Enforcement Officers are responsible for inspecting food businesses to ensure that they meet the legal requirements on food hygiene. Under the 'Scores on the Doors' scheme, each food outlet is given a score that reflects the inspection findings and may display this at the point of sale. The score is also available via a website where consumers can see the scores for all the businesses in the local area.

Experience with these schemes suggests that as well as providing information to consumers, they can encourage businesses to raise their hygiene standards. Walsall Council is keen to participate in the national scheme and is currently waiting for a commencement date.

Alternative Inspection Strategy

The Food Standards Agency has recognised the importance of concentrating resources on high and medium risk rated premises. Therefore, Category C premises that are "Broadly Compliant" can be inspected by an alternative method on alternate planned inspections (monitoring, surveillance, verification, sampling as part of wider control). The alternative methods that can be employed for food hygiene inspections are detailed below:

1. Postal questionnaire for childminders
2. Topic based inspections (e.g. temperature control/ stock rotation)
3. Special projects/ surveys covering specific trade areas/ problems
4. Targeted sampling

For category D and E premises, an alternative enforcement strategy will be trialled this year for food hygiene inspections: All businesses in these categories will receive a postal questionnaire. Dependent on the information provided or failure to return the questionnaire, inspections may be undertaken.

Broadly Compliant: National Indicator 184

In April 2008, a new National Indicator was introduced to measure the standard of food businesses across the country. The indicator is a measure called 'Broadly Compliant'. The indicator uses information gathered during food hygiene inspections to ascertain whether a food business is in general compliant with the law and doesn't currently pose a risk to food safety. Because this is a new indicator, there is no historical data to compare the current performance against, but we have seen a good improvement across the year.

NI 184 has been removed from the National Indicator set from 1st April 2010 but we intend to maintain it as a local indicator as it is useful for assessing the overall picture of food safety compliance.

Food Standards Agency's Monitoring System (LAEMS)

The Food Standards Agency have implemented a new statistical monitoring system, whereby we upload data to the FSA web site straight from our back office database. This is intended to simplify our annual production of statistics for the FSA, although a considerable amount of resource has been expended in setting up the system to date. The first statistics were uploaded in 2008/2009 and a few problems were experienced in data conversion: This was because of a number of closed premises on the database. Data clearing exercises have been carried out to simplify the process in 2010/2011.

Pennington: 2005 Outbreak of E Coli 0157 in South Wales

As a result of the Public Inquiry into the 2005 Outbreak of E Coli 0157 in South Wales we have taken the following action:

1. All Officers involved in food safety enforcement have attended the Food Standards Agency HACCP training.
2. A system for "red flagging" potential problems has been introduced.
3. The procedure for monitoring Officer competency has been tightened.

We propose to arrange an in-house vacuum packing training course and to carry out special visits to butchers shops to assess HACCP compliance and to ensure there are no risks presented by dual use of vacuum packers.

3.4 FOOD PREMISES – STANDARDS AND FEEDINGSTUFFS

Food Standards interventions are programmed in relation to a risk based assessment of premises. The risk assessment of premises is established in line with the Food Law Code of Practice (2008). Traditionally, all food premises have been subject to food standards inspections. The Code of Practice now lays out alternative interventions which Local Authorities may adopt. These allow authorised Officers to use their professional judgement to apply a proportionate level of regulatory and enforcement activity to each food business. Interventions will be applied in a risk-based manner such that more intensive resources are directed at those businesses that present the greatest risk.

High -risk food premises will continue to receive programmed food standards inspections or audits.

Medium risk premises that are broadly compliant can be dealt with by “other official controls” on alternate planned inspections (monitoring, surveillance, verification, sampling as part of wider control).

Low risk premises will be subject to alternative enforcement strategies, such as the use of self assessment questionnaires, non analytical sampling, trader information, advice, complaint related inspections.

The results of alternative enforcement strategies will be assessed by a qualified food standards officer, who may initiate a further intervention if appropriate.

RISK CATEGORY	TOTAL PREMISES	TARGET NO. OF INTERVENTIONS
High	52	52
Medium	764	382
Low	327	65
Totals	1143	499

As required by the Code of Practice new food establishments that come within the scope of food standards will be subject to an initial inspection following which intervention ratings for the establishment will be determined.

In 2009/10 the following actions were undertaken by Trading Standards Officers:

- 1 63 food standards warnings were issued by Trading Standards Officers during the inspection of food premises 2009-2010. By the end of the year 91% of all food premises had achieved food standards compliance.
- 2 56 food complaints were received by the Trading Standards Service. These were resolved by a variety of enforcement methods which ranged from LACORS / FSA / Home Authority Referrals to business advice and written warnings.
- 3 24 food samples submitted to the Public Analyst were reported as incorrect. This resulted in 13 Home Authority Referrals and 11 warnings to local businesses.
- 5 Samples were also taken for nutritional analysis and any issues uncovered were resolved by business advice and consumer guidance. Hyperactivity colours in sweets and the nutrition of takeaway sandwiches were two such sampling projects.

3.5 ALTERNATIVE INSPECTIONS

The Food Standards Agency has recognised the importance of concentrating resources on high and medium risk rated premises. To this end they now allow low risk rated premises to be inspected by an alternative method. The alternative methods that can be employed for food standards inspections are a mixture of one or more of the following:

- Postal questionnaires/traders information
- Special projects/surveys covering specific trade areas/problems
- Targeted sampling and
- Responding to complaints

Effectiveness of the alternative inspection techniques will be assessed by means of one or more of the following:

- Limited follow up inspections
- Response rates/requests for assistance and
- Sampling

3.6 FOOD AND FEEDINGSTUFFS COMPLAINTS

The Authority investigates complaints concerning food produced, stored, distributed, handled, consumed or intended for human consumption within the Borough, to ensure that it is without risk to the health or safety of the public, it is correctly labelled and meets appropriate compositional or quality standards.

Service standards are set for response times to complaints. Performance against these targets is regularly monitored. In general, complaints will be responded to within 3 working days, however the more urgent the matter, the speedier the response.

All complaints and requests for service are recorded using the M3 software and team leaders regularly monitor progress.

NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT FOOD, PREMISES AND PERSONNEL			
Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Number of complaints	242	245	181

3.7 NATIONAL LIAISON WORK

Home Authority Principle

The Home Authority Principle has been developed by Food and Trading Standards Authorities as an aid to good enforcement practice. Practices which protect the consumer, encouraging fair trading, consistency and common sense. It aims to:

1. Encourage Authorities to place special emphasis on goods and services originating within their area.
2. Provide businesses with a Home Authority source of guidance and advice.
3. Support efficient liaison between Local Authorities.
4. Provide a system for the resolution of problems and disputes.

The principle commands the support of Local Authorities, central Government, Trade and Industry Associations, Consumer and Professional Regulatory bodies. Local Authorities have three distinct roles as:

1. **Home Authority:** the authority where the relevant decision making base of an enterprise is located - it's head office

2. **Originating Authority:** an authority in whose area a decentralised enterprise produces goods and services - the manufacturing base
3. **Enforcing Authority:** all authorities when undertaking an inspection, sampling or investigative role

Walsall MBC

1. Endorses the principles laid down in the LACORS Home Authority Principle.
2. Will act as the Home Authority for local businesses as necessary.
3. Where enforcement action impacts on a business's national policy, the Home Authority or Originating Authority will be consulted.
4. The Home Authority will also be consulted regarding, or informed of, local actions.
5. Whenever such consultation/information may be helpful, or indicative of matters with potential national implications.

Primary Authority Partnership

Effective local regulation requires confidence and mutual trust. Businesses should be able to rely on the Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards advice received from Local Authorities, in the knowledge that it is expert opinion, applicable across the UK, and a secure basis for investment and operational decisions. The Primary Authority scheme – which commenced on 6 April 2009 – drives and supports progress towards this outcome.

For the first time, businesses will be able to form a statutory partnership with a single local authority, which will provide robust and reliable advice that other councils must take into account when carrying out inspections or dealing with non-compliance. The scheme builds on the foundation created by voluntary home and lead authority initiatives, but entails a fundamental shift in the nature of the relationship between the regulated and the regulator – bringing benefits to both parties.

The administration of the Primary Authority scheme is a statutory responsibility of the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO). Our role is to register partnerships, issue guidance, approve inspection plans, and resolve disputes.

Walsall Council has not received a request to form a Primary Authority Partnership.

3.8 ADVICE TO BUSINESSES

The Authority has always provided appropriate and competent advice, through a variety of different means, to local businesses and residents, within available resource constraints. Food hygiene and food safety advice is routinely given as part of inspection or intervention visit and is complemented by the use of targeted business updates, national and local publicity campaigns, and other promotional activities. Leaflets on food hygiene are given to businesses as appropriate.

From 1st January 2006 legislation changed to require all food businesses to have a written food safety system in place based on the principles of HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point). The Food Standards Agency programme, Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) is supported by the Authority. Under the scheme, a pre-printed pack of material is available for catering and retail businesses. Officers discuss SFBB at the time of inspection and coaching visits are carried out to help businesses get to grips with the system.

The service is projected to receive approximately 210 food advice requests in 2010/2011.

3.9 FOOD AND FEEDINGSTUFFS INSPECTION AND SAMPLING

Food inspection is an integral part of the Food Hygiene and Standards Inspection process.

Microbiological Sampling

Microbiological food sampling is carried out to meet four main objectives:

1. To determine the current state of food safety in the Borough as part of a structured sampling programme.
2. To improve the effectiveness of food hygiene inspections.
3. To investigate suspect case of food poisoning where a link with a local business is suspected.
4. To investigate complaints about food.

An annual sampling programme is produced with a target of 200 microbiological food samples to be taken for examination. Microbiological examinations will be carried out under the free allocation from the Health Protection Agency using Heartlands Hospital in Birmingham.

The samples are taken by the Food Safety Officer; other Officers are authorised and can take samples if necessary. The food sampling programme links with the LACORS sampling programme as well as taking account of local trends and needs.

Food Sampling Programme 2010/11

Food Manufacturers and Manufacturers Selling Mainly by Retail

Company	Address	Food	Due
Gorman's Pork Pies	48 Central Drive, Bloxwich, Walsall	Pork Pies	April 2010
Midland Food Products	Unit 64, Morgan Close, Willenhall,	Meat pies	July 2010
Tasty Snacks Ltd	Unit 5 & 6, Phoenix Business Park, Stafford Street, Walsall	Sandwiches	November 2010
Midland Chilled Foods Ltd	Stringes Lane, Willenhall.	Meat pies	November 2010
Midland Sandwich Company	Bridgeman Street, Walsall.	Scotch eggs	November 2010
T C Morris	81 Walsall Street, Willenhall.	Pork pies	January 2011
Piquant Ltd	Willenhall Lane, Bloxwich	Mayonnaise	January 2011
Coopers,	195 Walsall Road, Darlaston	Cooked meats	January 2011

Hospitals

Hospital	Address	Due
Manor Hospital CPU	Moat Road, Walsall	August 2010
Dorothy Pattison Hospital	Alumwell Close, Walsall	October 2010

LACORS/HPA National Surveys:

Survey	Description	Due
Pennington Response – Study 2	Hygiene practices and interventions in retail and catering premises.	Samples to be taken in June, July, February and March
Focused shopping basket	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> contamination in ready-to-eat foods linked to listeriosis.	July 2009 – September 2009

West Midlands and Warwickshire Food Surveillance Group Surveys

Survey	Description	Due
Ready-to-eat fish products and shellfish	From display units in supermarkets/retailers	12 th April to 11 th June 2010
Cleaning cloths and swabs	Extension of the LACORS study to include other retail premises	June and July 2010 and February and March 2010
Hot and cold food from restaurants and takeaways	To concentrate on rice, base sauces, salads and food from hot and cold buffets	Samples to be taken throughout the year
Soft ice cream	from mobile vendors. Focusing on <i>Listeria</i>	Samples to be taken in July and August

Where unsatisfactory microbiological samples are taken, businesses are given support to identify any problems in the storage and handling of foodstuffs. Actions necessary to secure improvements are highlighted. Return samples will then be taken to ensure that the necessary improvements have been implemented.

3.10 COMPOSITION AND LABELLING (Food Standards Sampling)

An annual sampling programme is drawn up to ensure that food is accurately labelled and meets compositional standards. It also facilitates the support and auditing of local businesses and contributes to the Food Standards Agency's healthy food / healthy eating campaign. The programme is devised following consultation with stakeholders and in adherence with the Corporate Plan, Vision and Values and the priorities identified by the Food Standards Agency's Strategy 2010-2015. It is enhanced by additional sampling in response to complaints and new areas of concern.

In addition since 2008 substantial funding has been obtained from the Food Standards Agency to carry out sampling under their imported food surveillance programme. The Authority also successfully participates in regional sampling programmes conducted by Central England Trading Standards Authorities (CeNTSA) as well as LACORS and additional FSA food authenticity projects.

Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Food samples	494	501	328

3.11 THE CONTROL AND INVESTIGATION OF OUTBREAKS OF FOOD POISONING AND FOOD/WATER RELATED INFECTIOUS DISEASE

General Practitioners across the Borough report suspected cases of food poisoning to the Consultant for Communicable Disease Control (CDDC) at the Health Protection Agency. The Local Medical Laboratory advises the CDDC of positive results for food poisoning and food/water related illness. The Food Safety Team is then advised and carries out investigation of outbreaks of food borne infectious disease.

The Authority has a documented procedure for the investigation of incident of reported or suspected cases of food poisoning and a formal plan to cover the management of the investigation outbreaks of food borne infectious disease.

Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Number of individual investigated cases	216	283	285

3.12 FOOD SAFETY INCIDENTS

The Food Standards Agency declares food safety incidents from time to time and notifies Food Authorities of these by means of a 'Food Alert' procedure. Some of the notifications require immediate action depending on the local distribution of food and products.

The Authority has a procedure for dealing with food Safety Incidents normally notified through the 'Food Alert' system. Food alerts are also sent to foodsafety@walsall.gov.uk; the procedure is in line with the requirements of Food Safety codes of Practice. A central log of all Food Alerts is maintained.

3.13 LIAISON WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The Authority is represented on the regional LACORS liaison group CENTSA (Central England Trading Standards Authorities) and refers food issues to this body whenever appropriate. The Authority participates in a discussion forum to ensure consistent enforcement, supports sampling, investigative and publicity initiatives to ensure maximum effect in the use of resources for the benefit of the citizens of Walsall.

The Authority is also a member of the West Midlands Food Hygiene Liaison Group which aims to:

1. Act as a forum to provide consistency of enforcement.
2. Act as a facilitator for benchmarking activities.
3. Provide 'standardisation' exercises to facilitate consistency.

It fully supports decisions taken at the group and actively engages in the programme of activities arranged by the group.

The Authority also works in partnership with the following organisations either on an ongoing basis or as the result of targeted work programmes.

1. LACORS
2. Food Standards Agency
3. FSA South West & West Midlands Regional Office
4. School Foods Trust
5. The Primary Care Trust.
6. Walsall Catering Services
7. Worcestershire Scientific Services
8. Staffordshire Scientific Services
9. Walsall Children's Services
10. Walsall Social Care and Inclusion
11. Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust
12. Department of Health (West Midlands).

4.0 RESOURCES

4.1 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The table below shows the cost of the Environmental Health Food Safety service for last year and includes an estimate of its cost for 2010/11.

	09/10(Expenditure)	10/11 (Estimate)
Staffing Costs	286,683	285,316
Support Services	88,332	120,993
Supplies and Services	33,195	9,963
Transport Costs	13,118	15,309
Income	(4,430)	(2,933)
Expenditure	400,975	438,006

4.2 STAFFING ALLOCATION

Food Safety is delivered in three geographic teams of Environmental Health Officers and a Food Safety Officer. Environmental Health Officers all possess a BSc. or MSc. in Environmental Health. The Food Safety Officer has a Higher Certificate in Food Premises Inspection from the Environmental Health Officers Registration Board (EHORB). All Environmental Health Officers hold a registration from EHORB and other appropriate qualifications.

The Environmental Health Officers in the Food Teams are also responsible for Occupational Health and Safety in food premises and therefore some of their time is allocated to non-food work.

When vacancies in the teams occur during the year the work programme is reprioritised and some areas of work may not be carried out. Appropriately, qualified contractors may be used to fill anticipated shortfalls in inspection targets.

Staff Allocation to Food Safety Service

Post	Level of Competency
1 Service Manager	Registered with EHORB
3 Principal Officers	Registered with EHORB
8.7 Environmental Health Officers	Registered with EHORB
1 Food Safety Officer	Higher certificate

In 2009/10 there were 6.65 FTE Officers dedicated to Environmental Health Food Safety work.

In 2010/11 it is estimated that there will be 6.25 FTE Officers dedicated to Environmental Health Food Safety work.

Food Standards Law enforcement is predominantly carried out by the following staff:-

2 x Principal Trading Standards Officers
4 ½ x Trading Standards Officers
2 ½ x Assistant Trading Standards Officers

Approximately 20% of their time is spent on food work providing 1.8 full time equivalent's for this type of work.

The above Officers are qualified to carry out Food Standards work in accordance with Chapter 1.2 of the Food Law Code of Practice (England) 2008.

In 2004-2005 the service had 2.5 FTE delivering the service. The potential demands on the service since then have increased with more emphasis on partnership working, FSA and LACORS projects, FSA campaigns and promotions, advice to business and alternative enforcement actions.

Required FTE's to deliver the service

2 ½ ATSOs 75 %
1 Lead officer for food 75 %
4 TSO's 30%
2 PTSO's 20%

Food Qualified FTE = 3.5
Administration 1 FTE

4.3 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Every year staff Individual Performance Management meetings take place where discussions take place with staff and in the light of the service plan objectives, action plans are drawn up for each individual.

All Food Law Enforcement Officers receive training assessments and evaluation during their 6 monthly Performance Management reviews. External and internal training provision is then identified in accordance with staff and service requirements. To maximise budgetary provision wherever possible support is given to courses provided by CeNTSA and the FSA who have proven to be the most cost effective training suppliers. Officers are also able to identify forthcoming training via the CeNTSA annual training plan. In house development in the form of workshops and cascade training is also utilised where appropriate.

Although the recommended minimum training for each officer is 10 hours training specifically on the practical and/or legislative aspects of Food Standards work per year this may be exceeded as requirements demand.

5.0 QUALITY ASSESSMENT

5.1 QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The Food Safety Service utilises the following methods to assess its performance.

A staged and mentored approach to the authorisation of staff.

Principal Officers make periodic accompanied visits with Environmental Health Officers/Food Safety Officer. Monitoring includes the checking of formal notices served and paperwork. In addition there is an annual IPM and team meetings where pertinent issues can be discussed.

Officers also participate in regional standardisation exercises and peer reviews visits as organised.

The Manager undertakes a quarterly assessment of the Service's work.

6.0 REVIEW

6.1 REVIEW AGAINST SERVICE OBJECTIVES

The service plan pulls together significant information about the Food Safety and Standards enforcement activities of this Authority. Performance indicators (PIs) and service objectives are reviewed on a quarterly basis through the performance management structure.

Some key performance measures from the year 2009/10 are:

Performance indicator		Target	Actual
NI 184	Food establishments in the area that are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	This was a new indicator for 2008/09. Target not set by government for 2009/10. 74% achieved in 2008/09.	74.33% of premises were Broadly Compliant.
EH2	Number of inspections of food premises	100% of Inspections due (1038)	100% (1220 premises were inspected. During course of year backlog of premises identified and programme adjusted to address backlog.)
EH3	Number of Food Samples taken for microbiological examination	200	201
EH7	No. of reported cases of food borne disease receiving response within same working day	100% (283 reported cases of food borne disease in 2009/10)	91% (285 reported cases of food borne disease)
EH8	No. of complaints receiving first response within 3 working days. These complaints relate to food, premises and personnel.	100%	94% (181 complaints were received relating to food, premises and personnel)

6.2 VARIATION FROM SERVICE PLAN

Calculations show that 74.33% of premises in the Borough are broadly compliant with food hygiene law. Knowing that this is the case clearly for the year ahead scrutiny of the data around the non compliant premises is needed.

Where common themes, common types of premises or indeed any geographical similarities are found the Principal Officer - Food Safety will lead a piece of work on interventions that may bring these premises to a higher standard.

It will also be for the Environmental Health Management Teams responsibility to react more swiftly to performance monitoring reports. This will include in the day to day supervision of Staff reflection on inspections where non compliant premises are found to ensure the right level of intervention has taken place to raise the premises standards.

Consideration has also been given to possible deficiencies in our reaction to food borne disease notifications. Whilst improvements were made through the year to reach the overall total of 91% the response still needs improvement. Once the Divisional restructure is embedded singular responsibility for Food Safety and Infectious Disease management will assist in identifying and resolving any administrative issues.

The response rate to complaints whilst at 94% again could be improved upon. Inevitably with work pressures, staff absences and occasional administrative mistakes the response target can be missed. Once the restructure of the Division is embedded the control and management of work allocation will be improved. With the introduction of a Departmental Support Officer it is hoped efficiencies in working practices will be made to the benefit of Staff and leading to improvement in reaching response targets.

6.3 AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

Officers are generally achieving an acceptable level of performance in what has been and continues to be a challenging time. The Division will have to improve it's use of I.T., increase it's adherence to efficient and effective procedures and investigate and where possible implement good practice from Regional and National Groups.

The Management of the Division needs to be and will be more inclusive of Officers opinions and suggestions on interventions and efficiencies. A move to more task and finish working groups will be implemented rather than the reliance on large Divisional meetings with cumbersome Agenda lists.

Trying to move forward with new ideas in isolation will hamper efforts at improving performance. Inclusion of Trading Standards and Business Support when formulating strategies or efficiencies will be key to improving performance.

The Food Safety Officers will be encouraged to take a lead from the Health and Safety Officers as regards Partnership working and the use of funding streams. Finance and shared resources may then become available to supplement, consolidate or improve the work the Division already does.

7.0 WORK PLAN FOR THE FOOD SAFETY TEAM 20010/11

The Authority seeks to ensure that food produced, prepared and sold in the borough is safe and without risks to health and meets appropriate quality standards. This will be achieved by:

1. Enforcement of statutory controls:
2. Development of services and initiatives, to influence and improve food hygiene and food standards across the Borough;
3. Monitoring of food, premises and personnel in a structured manner which indicates the condition of food standards in the Borough

PI No	PI Title	Action	Target	Suggested Timescale
EH2	Number of inspections of food premises	To inspect all businesses at intervals prescribe in the Code of Practice	100%	March 2010
EH3	Development of an alternative inspection regime for food premises rated D and E	To contact all businesses due for inspection with a postal questionnaire and follow up any premises of concern with an inspection	100%	Quarterly review
EH4	Number of Food Samples taken for microbiological examination	To develop and implement a food sampling programme to establish the microbiological safety of food sold in the Borough. To align this programme with National sampling priorities	200	March 2010
EH7	No. of reported cases of food borne disease receiving response within same working day	To achieve the services response time for service requests	100%	March 2010
EH8	No. of complaints receiving first response within 3 working days	To achieve the services response time for service requests	100%	Quarterly review

APPENDIX 1 to Food Law Enforcement Service Plan

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FOOD SAFETY SERVICE RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

FOOD PREMISES INSPECTIONS

There are **2085** food businesses on the premises database which are subject to inspection.

The profile of premises due for inspection in 2010/2011 is:

A	(inspected every 6 months)	54 x 2 = 108
B	(inspected every 12 months)	251
C	(inspected every 18 months)	589
D	(alternative enforcement strategy)	108
E	(alternative enforcement strategy)	10

Total **1066** premises inspections due

The Authority will aim to inspect 100% of all category A, B, C premises which fall due within the year. For category D and E's an alternative enforcement strategy will be trialled this year for food hygiene inspections. All businesses in these categories will receive a postal questionnaire. Dependent on the information provided or failure to return the questionnaire, inspections may be undertaken.

Resource requirements 3198 hours

REVISITS

Revisits/ Secondary inspections will continue to be undertaken whenever necessary. To enable Officers to concentrate on risk and to safeguard resources, the 'Revisit Decision Tree' which forms part of the West Midlands Food Liaison Group Enforcement Policy will be introduced. Based on the number of secondary inspections undertaken last year it is expected that a similar number (122) will be undertaken during 2010/2011.

Resource requirements 122 hours

HACCP

The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 were enacted on the 11th January 2006. The Regulations require businesses to implement food safety procedures based on HACCP principles. Following the 2009 Public Inquiry into the September 2005 outbreak of E Coli 0157 in South Wales, ensuring that businesses meet the HACCP requirement of this legislation will continue to be a priority of the team this year: It is envisaged that a greater resource will be required for this. Businesses will be coached in the development of Safer Food Better Business and HACCP following inspections of suitable businesses.

Resource Requirement 600 hours

FOOD COMPLAINTS

Numbers of complaints received during 2009/2010:

Food	121
Food hygiene	85
Total	206

Complaints are dealt with according to the internal policies FHP6 and FHP7 which were developed in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice and LACORS guidance. It is anticipated that a similar number of complaints will be received in the forthcoming year.

Resource requirement 1236 hours

HOME AUTHORITY PRINCIPLE

Walsall Council welcomes the opportunity to work closely with food businesses recognising the benefits to both the business and officers in gaining detailed experience of companies' food safety management systems. Walsall is keen to establish a home authority arrangement where appropriate.

Walsall Council does not currently act as formal Home Authority for any businesses but there are a number of businesses for which Walsall is the originating authority. This involves providing advice and information to these businesses and other local authorities in whose area they trade:

- One Stop Stores limited: Nationwide convenience stores
- Blakemores/ Spar: Nationwide convenience stores.

- Poundland: Nationwide convenience stores
- Highate Foods: Cake manufacture and nationwide supply
- Baker Boy: Cake manufacture and nationwide supply
- T C Morris: Approved premises
- Midland Food Products: Approved premises
- G J Simmons: Approved Premises
- C A Gorman: Approved Premises
- Midland Pie Products: Approved Premises
- Piquant Sauces: Approved Premises
- Lawrence Meats: Approved premises
- ACE Pub Supplies: Manufacturing Premises
- Coopers Family Butchers: Approved Premises
- A E Poxon & Sons: Approved Premises
- Chicken Joes: approved Premises
- Tican Chilled: Approved Premises
- Potters Pork Products: Approved Premises
- A & S Foods: Approved Premises
- Empire Cold Storage: Approved Premises
- Baker Boy: Approved Premises

Resource requirement 150 hours

ADVICE TO BUSINESS/ CONSUMERS

Failure to make advice available can lead to food safety being compromised; this aspect of Walsall Council's service is therefore seen as essential. During 2009/2010 220 requests for food hygiene advice were received. In view of the emphasis on the requirement for food businesses to comply with the HACCP requirements it is envisaged that greater resources will be required in the forthcoming year.

Advice to businesses is also available to all businesses via the food web pages. The web pages will continue to be reviewed and updated according to the needs of our customers and when new guidance is published. Other methods of providing advice and communicating with businesses and the public will be explored as appropriate e.g newsletters and press releases.

Resource requirement 880 hours

FOOD INSPECTION AND SAMPLING

The annual food hygiene sampling budget has been subject to budget cuts and Walsall Council utilises an allocation of 200 credits from the Health Protection Agency laboratory in order to conduct targeted food sampling.

Analysis and examination of food complaints is undertaken by the Public Analyst and routine food samples are analysed by the Consultant Microbiologist at HPA Good Hope Hospital.

Walsall has a commitment to sample its manufacturing premises on a yearly basis.

In addition Walsall participates in the LACORS/HPA annual sampling programmes and sampling exercises agreed by the West Midlands Food Liaison Group.

Resource requirement 400 hours

CONTROL AND INVESTIGATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Walsall Council investigates notified cases of food borne illness as directed by the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC). The Team's target is to investigate all notified cases within 24 hours of notification: Notifications of Campylobacter are dealt with by sending a standard letter. Notified cases of infectious diseases are investigated by officers in accordance with procedure FHP9, to determine their source, prevent further spread of infection and to provide advice to patients. In 2009/2010 285 notifications of infectious diseases were investigated.

Outbreaks

Procedure FHP9 outlines the investigation of infectious diseases and requires the CCDC to be contacted in all cases of an outbreak. There is also a Community Outbreak Control Plan drawn up by the CCDC in consultation with the West Midlands Authorities and the Health Protection Agency.

Regular meetings are held between the Principal Environmental Health Officer, CCDC and the Health Protection Agency's infection control nurses.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been established between the local authorities within the West Midlands to provide support in terms of staff and resources should there be a cross boundary outbreak.

Resource Requirement 1412 hours

FOOD ALERTS

Policy FHP10 outlines the procedure for dealing with Food Alerts: Alerts requiring action will be dealt with as soon as they are received. A central log is kept of all Food Alerts received and the action taken.

Resource requirement 100 hours

LIAISON WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Walsall Council regularly participates in the West Midlands Food Liaison Group (WMFLG), which has a direct link to LACORS. The terms of reference for the WMFLG include ensuring consistency throughout the West Midlands Authorities. Joint projects are undertaken and the group also arranges training opportunities for officers across the group, which promotes consistency of enforcement.

The Joint Meat Enforcement Working Party was established through the WMFLG in recognition of the various bodies involved with enforcement issues in respect of meat. This Working Group provides a forum for representatives from local authorities, MHS and OVS to exchange views and share practice with the aim of improving communication and consistency.

The HPA Laboratory User Group meets regularly to discuss sampling issues and issues relating to sampling results and emerging trends. The meeting is attended by Sampling Officers from the West Midlands Authorities and representatives from the HPA laboratories.

Regular liaison with the Health Protection Agency and the CCD is carried out through regular meetings. There is regular contact with the Health Protection Agency to discuss sampling programmes and training sessions are held to ensure consistency with regard to infection control issues.

Officers regularly consult the Licensing Team in relation to the licensing of street traders and advise Planning Services in relation to planning applications. This involvement has increased as hot food takeaways become more prevalent throughout the Borough.

The Licensing Team regularly communicates with OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission in relation to nurseries, childminders and residential care homes. Liaison takes place with Walsall Catering Service through inspection of school kitchens.

Relationships with other Directorates of the Council continue to be developed wherever possible.

Resource requirement 500 hours.

FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION AND SCORES ON THE DOORS

The Council regularly publishes press releases relating to emergency closures, prosecutions, food alerts and other important aspects of food safety enforcement by the Environmental Health Division.

The Environmental Health Division recognises the importance of the Scores on the Doors scheme and is awaiting an announcement on the national implementation date from the Food Standards Agency. It is anticipated that there will be a need to carry out file checks and database cleansing to ensure that the database is up to date and contains accurate information: This will have a significant impact on the work of the Division as this work is likely to be labour intensive.

Resource requirement 600 hours

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The inputting on inspections onto the M3 database, the drafting of inspection reports, drafting of Notices and completion of the file inspection report sheet is carried out by Officers; in preparation for Scores on the Doors Officers are also checking whether the database records are up to date and accurate.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

Annual staff appraisals and performance reviews are undertaken in accordance with Corporate requirements. Procedure FHP14 details the policy for the monitoring of Officer competency.

Training needs are identified and training is undertaken in accordance with the agreed training plan but the current financial climate places significant financial constraints on the training budget. This established system of appraisals and identification of training needs is helping Walsall Council towards its goal of achieving its Investor in People (IIP) status.

Due to the financial pressures placed on the training budget, the Environmental Health Division plans to run a programme of continuing professional development (CPD), which involves lunchtime talks on a variety of Environmental Health related subjects. All staff are invited to attend these sessions.

The West Midlands Competency/Training Matrix is used to ensure the competency of newly qualified and returning staff.

Resource requirement 595 hours

SUMMARY

	Units	Time (hours)	
Food Premises Inspections	1066	3198	
Revisits	122	122	
HACCP		600	
Food Complaints	206	1236	
Home Authority Principle		150	
Advice To Businesses/ Consumers	220	880	
Food Inspection and Sampling	200	400	
Infectious Disease	285	1412	
Food Alerts		100	
Liaison With Other Organisations		377	
Food Safety Promotion		600	
General Administration		1371	
Staff Development		595	
TOTAL		11041	
FTE staff available for Food Safety service			6.25
Number of hours worked per annum		1560	
TOTAL		6.25 x 1560 = 9750	
Resource Deficit		1291	