



Appendix 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICE PLAN

2017/2018

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Executive Summary

This is the Council's mandatory annual plan for the effective enforcement of food safety legislation. This plan fulfils the Council's obligations under the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement with the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The objective of this plan is to ensure that a programme of food enforcement activity is carried out, providing public confidence that food is produced without risk and sold under hygienic and safe conditions in Tower Hamlets. This plan is a public document and will be published on the Council's website. The layout of the plan is dictated by the Framework Agreement between the Food Standards Agency and Local Authorities.

The plan sets out the aims and objectives of the Environmental Health & Trading Standards (EHTS) Service's Food Team and links team priorities to the Council's core themes. The plan also gives an up to date profile of the Borough, a review of our activities in 2016/17 and our programme of work for 2017/18.

Inspection Plan

In 2016/17, the Food Team carried out 97% of all Food Hygiene inspections due in the higher bands of A-C (100% A, 100% B and 93% C) and 76% of all food standards inspections due in the higher bands of A-B (100% A). Food Standards inspections are seen as a second priority to that of food hygiene as this area of work crosses local authority boundaries.

Food Hygiene examines the businesses processes and procedures in the preparation and service of food. Food Standards examines issues around labelling, composition components of the food and date marking. The inspection programme for both inspection types are led by food hygiene, as the risks are under local control and deemed to be greater. Food Standards inspections are undertaken if the next inspection date from the risk rating assessment score falls during the same year that the food hygiene inspection is due. This therefore results in a lower percentage of food standards inspection being undertaken. However, we have undertaken 100% of all high risk, A-band, food standards inspections.

Enforcement

Enforcement activity was appreciably lower than in the previous three years in terms of food premises emergency closures. There were 11 premises closures in 16/17 comprising 10 emergency prohibitions, and one voluntary closure. The premises closures were for pest infestations; a total of £93, 159.69 fines/costs were issued by the Courts from 6 court cases taken forward last year (£59,168 from 4 cases 15/16).

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

We currently have 81% of our food premises broadly compliant with food hygiene law, this includes those new premises yet to be inspected. The steady influx of new food businesses accounts for some of this as unrated premises count against this figure; if they remain uninspected we have potentially broadly compliant premises counting against us. We have introduced a triage system to ensure that those who register are contacted to confirm they are actually going to start trading before they are entered on to the database

Food for Health

The Service has continued to receive external funding to continue with the Food for Health Award which aims to create a culture of healthy food choices for residents/workers in the Borough. Whilst a separate Team has been tasked with delivering this initiative the Food Team still raises awareness of the scheme by briefing businesses during inspections. In 16/17 773 Food for Health briefing sessions were carried out. As businesses are only allowed to take part in the scheme if they are broadly compliant, the Food Team has a direct impact on who can and who cannot be included. Briefing work will continue into this year as we have secured funding until April 2017. In 16/17 the Healthy Eating Award Scheme resulted in 18 unique premises awards and 32 renewals/upgrades.

Reducing Inspection Burdens

We have reviewed our services to determine if the inspection burden can be lifted on local businesses but ensuring that hazards are controlled to ensure public health is not at risk. We have done this where the risk rating indicates that the business is broadly compliant. This has enabled extra focus on the higher risk premises, to reduce the risk of inadequate food safety management.

As a result of the Central Government spending review, we may not be able to inspect all those premises that fall due in 2017/18. Those premises that may not be inspected have been selected due to their low risk nature. This may be because of the foods sold or because there are other monitoring regimes that are in place for the premises. Premises that fall into this category are wet pubs, low risk schools and pharmacies.

As stated above, food hygiene work takes priority over standards work. "A" rated standards inspections are the only standards work that is built into the inspection programme as a priority 100% of the premises rated A for standards will be inspected. B and C rated standards inspections are accounted for in the programme, but are largely picked up where hygiene inspections are due. There are 859 standards inspections due (as of 01/04/17). 15 are A rated and so will have to be inspected for standards only. B and C standards inspections that are due outside the hygiene programme and are unlikely to be inspected unless for example a complaint is received or officers carry out sampling at the premises.

1 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Aims and objectives

1.1.1 To promote and regulate food safety, food standards, health and safety in food premises.

1.1.2 To provide advice and education to all sectors of the community on food safety matters. The promotion of Food for Health award in conjunction with Public Health in the fast food outlets with the aim to reduce obesity in children.

1.1.3 To prevent the spread of infectious disease and food poisoning and investigate outbreaks.

1.1.4 Health and Safety including smoke free enforcement and advice and accident investigation.

1.1.5 Animal welfare and the control of zoonotic diseases.

1.2 Links to Corporate objectives and plans

1.2.1 The Food Law Enforcement Service Plan is designed to meet customer needs and our services are provided with reference to the:

- Community Plan
- Council's Strategic Plan
- Directorate's Annual Plan
- Divisional Service Plan
- Council's Enforcement Policy

1.2.2 The activities of the Environmental Health & Trading Standards (EHTS) - Food Team are linked where possible to these strategies, policies and objectives. These are set out in the Team Plan which details amongst other issues, the Food Enforcement objectives for the year and defines the performance that has been set to meet these targets. The Team also has a statutory function and is linked through to the Food Standards Agency, Health and Safety Executive, Department of Food and Rural Affairs, Animal Health Agency and Public Health England.

1.2.3 The aim of the Community Plan is to:

Improve the lives for all those living and working in the Borough

1.2.4 The Council will realise its overall Vision for the Borough through four core themes, underpinning these themes is the commitment to One Tower Hamlets:

- A great place to live
- A Prosperous Community
- A Safe and Cohesive Community
- A Healthy and Supportive Community

1.2.5 The aim of the EHTS Food Team is to protect residents, visitors and businesses by:

- *The enforcement of consumer legislation by way of inspection, audit, complaint investigation, awards, training/advice and enforcement.*
- *Advising consumers on the resolution of civil disputes with traders.*
- *Promoting and regulating food hygiene/safety and standards of health and safety both in the workplace and at public events in the Borough*
- *Preventing the spread of infectious disease and food poisoning, and the investigation of outbreaks*
- *Issue and enforcement of “approvals” covering a range of activities concerning products of animal origin (POAO) in manufacturing premises.*
- *Developing partnerships with businesses, regeneration initiatives and other organisations in the Borough*
- *Involving ourselves in national strategies i.e. Obesity Strategy*
- *Promotion of business awards for smoke free and healthy eating in conjunction with public health services*
- *Animal welfare and the control of zoonotic infections (infections that pass from animals to humans)*
- *Allowing members of the public to make an informed decision on which establishments they eat in/buy food from by informing them of the general hygiene standard of premises via the FHRS and the affiliated website, window stickers and certificates.*

1.2.6 The Food Law Enforcement Plan links in with the detailed activities that have been developed as part of the Team Plan and individual officer performance, development and review plans.

2.0 **BACKGROUND**

2.1 Profile of Tower Hamlets

2.1.2 Tower Hamlets has a wide range of commercial food businesses located across different parts of the borough. Some of the key businesses include:

- Major supermarkets (Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury, Lidl, Marks and Spencer & Waitrose)
- Office developments occupied by blue chip companies, newspaper publishers, with large scale catering
- Several major hotels, including Britannia, Four Seasons, Gouman, Holiday Inn, Hilton, Radisson and Marriott
- There is a diverse range of restaurants and cafes in the borough, including Italian, French, Greek, Turkish, Somali, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Thai and those from the Indian sub-continent (India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan)
- 93 schools
- Billingsgate – London’s major Wholesale & Retail Fish Market
- World famous street markets at Petticoat Lane, Whitechapel, Brick Lane, Columbia Road and Roman Road
- London Guildhall University, Queen Mary University of London and The Royal London Hospital Medical Schools
- The Royal London, Mile End and London Independent Hospitals
- 2 poultry slaughterhouses
- 3 City Farms
- Numerous night clubs & other venues
- Many community events such as concerts in Victoria Park and festivals in Brick Lane.

2.2 Organisational Structure

2.2.1 The Team is located within the Environmental Health & Trading Standards Service (EHTS). EHTS is part of the Public Realm Division which is part of the Place Directorate. A Team resource analysis has been undertaken at Annex A, the Council’s administrative committee structure is set out in Annex B and the structure showing where the service sits in the overall council organisation is in Annex C.

2.2.2 Food Safety falls within the portfolio of Cllr Amina Ali as Cabinet Member for the Environment

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

2.3.1 The Environmental Health & Trading Standards Food Team is responsible for the following functions in all commercial premises.

- food hygiene – food preparation and handling
- food standards – food labelling and composition
- health and safety
- infectious disease control
- public health activities

2.3.2 Nuisance and Pollution control issues related to commercial premises are dealt with by the Pollution Team. The Trading Standards Team deals with animal feeding-stuffs and fraudulent activities covered by the Food Safety Act 1990.

2.3.3 A proactive and reactive service in relation to food hygiene and food standards is provided primarily through the programmed inspection of food businesses and by responding to service requests including comments on planning and licensing applications.

2.4 Demands on the Food Service

2.4.1 Premises Profile

2.4.2 The tables below show the number of food businesses in each risk category classified by type of activity and risk rating. Some premises, where the risk is negligible are discounted from the inspection programme.

2.4.3 Food Standards legislation sets out specific requirements for the labelling, composition and safety parameters of food stuffs which are potentially at risk of being misleadingly substituted with lower quality alternatives. The legislation makes sure consumers are not misled as to the nature of food products when it is sold to them. Premises that are inspected included importers and exporters who may not even hold food on their premises – this accounts for the difference in total numbers in Table 1 and Table 2 below.

2.4.4 The Food Code of Practice details how premises should be scored for Food Standards, the following criteria are used,

- Risks to consumers/businesses
- Hazardous processes
- Ease of compliance
- Consumers at risk
- Current compliance
- Confidence in management systems

The above criteria are used to score food standards activities as A – C, with A being high risk. It is at this category that we undertake separate inspections, the remainder of the inspections for food standards are carried out when the necessary food hygiene inspection is due. The criteria are weighted and the Officer makes undertakes the scoring during the routine inspection, from the calculated score, an overall risk rating is achieved.

2.4.5 Food Hygiene is vital to prevent food poisoning. Our inspections cover food safety management procedures, cleaning, storing of food, pest control, preparation, cooking, the delivery and supplying of food, training of staff and the physical structure of the food premises. Inspections are mainly carried out at higher risk premises (A-C). The Food Law Code of Practice, the guidance document that must be followed by Local Authorities, classifies food premises by risk in several key criteria:

- Type of Food/Method of handling
- Method of processing
- Consumers at risk
- Vulnerable Groups
- Food Hygiene and Safety
- Structural Compliance
- Confidence in management systems
- Significance of risk/likely contamination

2.4.6 The above criteria have weighted scores and the total score is calculated by officers during their routine inspections to give an overall risk rating. 'A' being high risk and 'E' being low risk. The inspection frequencies are assigned nationally to each risk rating.

2.4.7 D/E rated premises are lower risk premises. They do not constitute zero risk however. The food law code of practice provides some concession for dealing with D rated premises. Whilst these premises still present a risk, we are duty bound to inspect them. They can, however, be put on a schedule of alternative enforcement i.e. self-audit questionnaire by the business. That would mean that they would alternate between an inspection and an alternative enforcement strategy each time they were due for inspection. This would reduce the burden on resources required to inspect D rated premises.

Table 1: Hygiene: Food businesses 17/18 and their inspection category for food hygiene (at May 2017)

	Row Labels	A	B	C	D	E	OUTSIDE	UNRATED	Grand Total
<p>The frequency of inspection is:</p> <p>A: every 6 months B: every 12 months C: every 18 months D: every 2 years E: every 3 years</p> <p>The Category for premises classed as unrated is determined at the first visit and can be A-E.</p> <p>Premises can move across the risk bands after inspection.</p> <p>Category D/E premises may be dealt with using an alternative enforcement strategy (AES).</p> <p>Premised in the "outside" category are premises for Food Standards only as there is i) no hygiene involved (i.e. it is an importers office or ii) hygiene is the responsibility of the FSA (i.e. FSA approved slaughterhouses).</p>	Caring premises	1	7	48	23	52		1	132
	Import/Export					2	4		6
	Importers (3rd countries)				1				1
	Pub/club		8	35	65	67		7	182
	Restaurant/cafe/canteen	17	92	311	405	47	4	48	928
	Retailer - other	1	1		9	69		3	79
	Small retailer	5	16	63	183	239		18	524
	Supermarket/hypermarket			4	21	30			55
	Takeaway	8	48	107	125	30	3	44	365
	Distributors/Transporters	1	6	14	35	29		4	89
	Food enforced by Port Health Authority.							1	1
	Hotel/Guest house			11	17	5		7	40
	Man/supplier article contact with food					1	1		2
	Manufacturers/packers		5	13	9	3		4	34
	Mobile Food Unit		1	8	16	5	1	4	35
	Other			1	3	1	1		6
	Packers				1				1
	Restaurant & caterers - other	1	18	68	176	75	2	49	389
	School/college	1	6	56	47	7		3	120
	Slaughterhouses					1	1		2
Grand Total		35	208	739	1136	663	17	193	2991

Table 2 : Standards: Food businesses 17/18 and their inspection category for food standards (at May 2017)

	Row Labels	A	B	C	OUTSIDE	UNRATE	Grand Total
The frequency of inspection is:	Caring premises		29	94		9	132
	Distributors/Transporters	4	72	9		4	89
A: every 12 months B: every 2 years C: every 5 years.	Hotel/Guest house		19	14		7	40
	Importers (3rd)		3	3			6
	Importers (EC)		2	1			3
	Man/Sup art contact with food			1	1		2
	Manufacturers	4	26	7		7	44
	Mobile food unit		18	13		4	35
The Category for premises classed as unrated is determined at the first visit and can be A-C.	Packers	1					1
	Pub/club		69	107		6	182
	Restaurant & caterers eg home caterers		158	174		49	381
	Restaurant/cafe/canteen	1	479	379		48	907
	Retailer – eg Pharmacies		2	14		2	18
	Retailers		9	41	9	2	61
Category C premises may be dealt with using an alternative enforcement strategy (AES).	School/college		37	83			120
	Slaughterhouses		1	1			2
	Small retailer	1	271	234	1	17	524
	Supermarket/Hypermarket		14	41			55
	Takeaway	4	193	134		44	375
	Grand Total	15	1402	1350	11	199	2977

Note: The premises category relates to the main food activity and is unitised in larger premises, so a restaurant or bar in a hotel will be shown under restaurants or bar, not as a hotel. A hotel may have several restaurants and these are therefore counted as individual restaurants as they may have varying risks. The food usage is only counted as a hotel, if the central kitchen supplies the whole hotel.

2.4.5 As of May 2017 there are 74 establishments were approved by the Council to handle, produce and manufacture food incorporating Products of Animal Origin (POAO) for wholesale purposes. Officers had to deal with 5 premises now considered to be cold stores as they store and distribute products of animal origin on a purely wholesale basis:

Table 3: Approved Establishments

Dairy products	5
Fishery Products	55
Fishery Products; Meat Products	1
Meat Cutting; De-Boning; Mincing; Wrapping	1
Meat products: treated stomachs, bladder and intestine: minced meat: meat preparations	1
Minced meat: meat products: fishery products: egg: dairy products	3
Minced meat: meat products: dairy products	1
Meat products; Meat Preparations	1
Cold Stores	6

2.4.6 Tower Hamlets' food businesses are primarily caterers and retailers.

2.4.7 There is a high level of imported foods (from non-EU Countries) entering the Borough, either directly imported by businesses or by third parties located elsewhere. Some of these foods can be illegal (i.e. banned from importation, processed in a way that contravenes EU legislation, or they do not comply with compositional or labelling requirements). This area of work is continually high due to low costs of cheap imports and high consumer demand. This food however gives rise to a risk to human health and we remove it from sale/enforce as necessary and offer advice to importers.

2.4.8 When carrying out a food hygiene or food standards inspection, officers may also carry out a health & safety inspection where the council is the enforcing authority for the relevant legislation.

2.4.9 One third of the population is of Bangladeshi origin and over half the population are from ethnic minorities. The make-up of food businesses reflects this profile, although demand for translation and materials in other languages is not high. Ethnic minority food business proprietors generally prefer written information to be provided in English. A translation and interpreting service is available if required and a number of our staff members are multilingual.

2.4.10 Reception and Information Service

2.4.11 The reception and information point for the EHTS Food Team is located at:

John Onslow House,
1 Ewart Place
Bow
London
E3 5EQ

With the postal address remaining the same at:

Mulberry Place
6th Floor
5 Clove Crescent
London E14 2BG

2.4.12 We operate an out-of-hours emergency call-out service, which operates from 5pm to 8am on a weekday and 24hrs at weekends and Bank Holidays. This service operates only for food poisoning outbreaks or major food safety incidents and other non-food safety related emergencies.

2.4.13 Tower Hamlets also has a website at www.towerhamlets.gov.uk and the EHTS Food Team have an E-mail address, namely: foodsafety@towerhamlets.gov.uk. This address is also used for the national electronic communication system for Environmental Health Departments, known as EHCNet.

2.5 Enforcement Policy

2.5.1 The current enforcement procedure is documented and outlines all enforcement action carried out by officers; it reflects the Council's Enforcement Policy. It seeks to ensure that formal enforcement is focused where there is a real risk to public health and that officers carry out action in a fair, practical and consistent manner.

2.5.2 The Council's Enforcement Policy is considered by the Team during all enforcement matters and is specifically referenced to when commencing a prosecution by the Council Legal Services.

2.5.3 Legal Services review all evidence in matters sent for enforcement by officers. Legislation and regulations are considered alongside the Council's Enforcement Policy when a case is considered for prosecution; this includes proportionality in

applying the law and securing compliance, being consistent in its approach to prosecutions, transparency and being targeted in its enforcement action.

3.0 **Service Delivery**

3.1 Inspection Programmes

- 3.1.1 Food establishments in the Borough are risk rated by the Food Law Code of Practice for England, which we must follow. A risk score of 10 points or below in the Officers scoring criteria with the compliance to regulations in relation to i) structure ii) hygiene preparation and iii) confidence in management determine if the premise is broadly compliant with food hygiene law. The indicator of broadly compliant with food hygiene law is used internally and by the Food Standards Agency. This indicator covers all the food premises in the Borough, not just those that are due for inspection this year.
- 3.1.2 The Food Law Code of Practice for England (that guides our inspection programme) permits shorter inspections on those businesses that are deemed broadly compliant i.e. in the lower risk categories of C and D for food hygiene. It also permits the use of posted questionnaires for those premises in category E and alternate enforcement strategies premises i.e. a formal inspection is not always required every time they fall due.
- 3.1.3 We use a hazard spotting approach for those premises that are deemed to be broadly compliant. This reduces the burden on business and concentrates our resources on the non-compliant businesses. However, a full inspection will be carried out if these compliant businesses are not in control of the risks or a public health risk is identified.
- 3.1.4 A significant number of businesses will continually move between broadly compliant and not broadly compliant. A significant number of re-inspections will be undertaken.
- 3.1.5 We have determined that we have 81% of all food premises currently broadly compliant with food hygiene legislation.
- 3.1.6 The Food Safety Officers carry out programmed food hygiene/standards inspections at frequencies determined by the Food Standards Agency and the Food Law Code of Practice. (The frequency of inspections are shown in Tables 1 and 2). A programmed food safety inspection will therefore cover food hygiene and food standards, where this falls due (although some premises will fall due for food standards inspection only) and we will also deal with issues relating to enforcement and advice under health and safety law, either in very broad terms or as part of a focused health & safety project. The inspection programme is dictated by the food hygiene inspection rating allocated to a business because this generally leads to more frequent inspections. This therefore builds in efficiency into the inspection programme by only inspecting for food standards in the year that food hygiene is due. However, Category A – high risk food standards inspection due dates are

checked to ensure that these are inspected in the current year. Some premises such as importers who do not actually handle or store food are subject only to food standards inspections.

3.1.7 Category E food hygiene and Category C food standards inspections will be addressed by using alternative enforcement strategies (AES), such as a self-audit questionnaire. These questionnaires will be sent to all Category E and C rated premises. Verification follow up will be carried out on 5% of these premises. Category D food premises could fall into an alternative enforcement strategy at alternative years.

3.1.8 For 2017/18 the number of food hygiene inspections that fall due is shown in Table 3 and the number of food standards inspections due is shown in Table 4:

Table 4

The number of food hygiene inspections tagged at 1st April 2017 and due to be carried out in 2017/18.

Inspection Rating	Number of food hygiene inspections due
A	34 x 2 = 68
B Broadly compliant	51
B <i>not Broadly compliant</i>	158
C Broadly compliant	377
C <i>not Broadly compliant</i>	78
D Broadly compliant	568
D <i>not broadly compliant</i>	21
E (verification)	346 (5% = 17)
Unrated	175
Total Full Inspections (i)	500
Total Surveillance inspections (s)	1013
Total Interventions	1513

Table 5

The number of food standards inspections due in 2017/18 and the inspection targets.

Inspection Rating	Number of food standards inspections due
A	15
B	601
C (verification)	64
Unrated	179
Total	859

- 3.1.9 Most food standards inspections will be carried out at the same time as a food hygiene inspection. It is the teams' target to achieve 100% of all A standards inspections due.
- 3.1.10 Where possible new premises identified will be added to the work programme to be inspected during the year. These 'unrated' businesses will count against the broadly compliant score and hence resources will be allocated to carry out inspections on the unrated businesses.
- 3.1.11 Food hygiene and food standards inspection procedures detail the steps to be followed by officers. They take account of relevant Codes of Practice, Local Government Regulation and FSA guidance and relevant Industry Guides.
- 3.1.12 Hygiene re-inspections (called verification visits) will be carried out where enforcement notices have been issued, where there is a significant public health risk, or the premises are not broadly compliant. Premises will not be re-rated at a verification visit.
- 3.1.13 Since the introduction of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme food businesses scoring less than 5 are able to request a re-inspection in an attempt to improve their rating score. There is a minimum period of three months from the original inspection where the inspection to re-rate will take place and inspections will take place subject to evidence of a sustained compliance being provided. There have been 52 such requests during 2016/17.
- 3.1.14 Food Standards re-inspections are of a lower priority and not required as often as for food hygiene.
- 3.1.15 The resource estimated for programmed hygiene inspections, including alternative enforcement strategies (AES) for lower risk premises for 17/18 is **3.9 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)**, and **0.83 FTE** for programmed standards inspections. The re-

inspections allocation will be **2.1 FTE**. **Annex A** gives details of the assessment of resources for all functions within the plan. The shortfall stands at **3.59 FTE for 17/18**. The shortfall will be dealt with by not inspecting all the premises that fall due where low risk pre-packed food is offered or other inspection regimes which deliver a similar inspection function, namely off- licences, newsagents and chemists.

3.1.16 Additional priorities have been identified for action in 2017/18 including:

- Inspections will be carried out at major festivals
- Sampling plan involving microbiological sampling, misleading claims and personal hygiene
- Routine attendance at Billingsgate Market
- All premises subject to approval will require additional attention and inspection time due to the risk they present
- Food Standards will be combined with Food Hygiene inspections
- Illegal importation of food will be targeted as priority
- Health & Safety inspections will be on a themed basis
- Focus on speciation sampling to verify that foods are what they are purported to be
- Project focussing on authenticity, traceability, and advertising
- Mail order foods
- Closures and follow-up enforcement action, including prosecution of businesses as appropriate
- Specific targeting of A risk premises and Higher B's with advice and enforcement
- Use of alternative enforcement strategies in low risk premises and consideration of not inspecting some if reactive demands are increased.

3.2 Food Complaints/Requests for Service

3.2.1 The Environmental Health & Trading Standards Team will record, assess, prioritise and deal appropriately with all requests for service. Requests for service will be classed as higher risk issues or lower risk issues. The target response time for service requests are:

- *To give a 1st response to 99% of service requests within 3 working days*
- *To respond to 100% of higher risk issue service requests within 24 hours.*
- *To register all new operating premises within 28 days of receipt of application form.*

3.2.2 The number of service requests for 2016/17 it was 1532 compared with 1328 the previous year.

3.2.3 The resource estimated for dealing with service requests is **1.93 FTE**.

3.3 Home Authority Principle

3.3.1 The Council formally adopted the Home Authority Principle at the Planning and Environmental Services Committee meeting of 13th June 1995. A Home Authority is the local authority where the decision-making base of an enterprise is situated. The local authority provides advice to the enterprise and deals with enquiries from other councils in relation to the business. An Originating Authority premises is one where the food is manufactured, stored or first imported to, but to which the definition of Home Authority does not apply. The new concept of Primary Authority Partnerships that has recently been introduced by the Government may affect work plans for companies where the company trades across two or more Local Authority areas. This will enable one Authority to be a Primary Authority that will guide the business on compliance issues.

3.3.2 Approximately 200 businesses have been identified as probable Home or Originating Authority premises. Enquiries for advice from local businesses or other enforcement authorities will be treated as requests for service and will be prioritised accordingly.

3.3.3 The resource estimated for this area of work is **0.26 FTE**.

3.4 Advice to business

3.4.1 Advice is freely available to food businesses and is provided during visits and upon request. Business information packs have been produced for people considering setting up a food business and are sent to relevant applicants for planning permission. A variety of information leaflets, in community languages, are also available.

3.5 Food Inspection and Sampling

3.5.1 Food is inspected in accordance with UK and EU legislation. A documented sampling programme is produced each financial year covering planned microbiological and chemical sampling. Our sampling policy is at Annex D

3.5.2 The programme includes participation in co-ordinated projects organised by Public Health England (PHE), EU, London Food Co-ordinating Group and North East London Food Liaison Group. Planned local projects and Home Authority sampling are also included.

3.5.3 The target for 2017/18 is approximately 180 (Proactive sampling in conjunction with NE sector, planned internal sampling and HPA; Reactive Sampling: a contingency sampling quota of 32 is set aside for internal samples from closures, seizures, outbreaks etc.). All samples to be taken by the end of the financial year. The budget for sampling is £12,000.

3.5.4 The total number of samples taken for 2016/17 was 162 of which 53 were unsatisfactory and follow up action was required. Most of the failed samples were multiple swabs taken in a single premises taken to check for Norovirus though other contaminants were found indicating poor cleaning and hand washing.

3.5.5 The Laboratories to which samples are sent are subject to the appropriate accreditation. Analysis is undertaken by the Council's nominated Public Analysts: -

Duncan Arthur
Public Analyst Scientific Services Limited.
i54 Business Park
Valiant Way
Wolverhampton
WV9 5GB

Microbiological examination is undertaken by:

Nicola Elviss (Food Examiner)

Public Health England, Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Unit (London), Food Safety Microbiology Laboratory, Central Public Health Laboratory, 61, Colindale Avenue, London, NW9 5HT.

On occasions, samples for microbiological examination will be sent to Public Analyst Scientific Services Laboratories.

3.5.6 The resource required for food sampling is estimated to be **0.6 FTE**

3.6 Outbreak Control and Infectious Disease Control

3.6.1 We will investigate all suspected and confirmed outbreaks of food poisoning and the Outbreak Control Plan will be implemented in the case of a major outbreak (i.e. 4 or more cases).

3.6.2 Individual allegations of food poisoning caused from consumption of food within the borough, but which are not supported by medical evidence will be treated as service requests. The number of allegations of food poisoning amounted to 222 in 2016/17. The level of resource is estimated at **0.05 FTE**

3.7 Food Safety Incidents

3.7.1 We deal with Food Alerts in accordance with the Code of Practice and guidance issued by the Food Standards Agency. Food Alerts: For Action requiring action by the department will take priority over all other work. The out-of-hours emergency service will notify the duty officer in the event that the Food Standards Agency notifies them of a major incident of food contamination which occurs outside normal office hours.

3.7.2 There is a policy document and procedure note on dealing with Food Hazard Warnings.

3.7.3 Resources for this work are dependent on the demand. In 2016/17, there were 53 Food Alerts: For Action and 123 Food Alerts: Allergy Alerts issued by the Food Standards Agency. Resources are therefore estimated at **0.07 FTE**. (Included in Service Requests above)

3.8 Liaison with Other Organisations

3.8.1 Liaison arrangements are in place to ensure that enforcement action in Tower Hamlets is consistent with neighbouring authorities and in particular: -

- Tower Hamlets is a member of the North-East London Food Liaison Group which meets every eight to twelve weeks.
- A PEHO attends regular sub-group meetings to discuss and arrange co-ordinated Approval processes.
- Planned liaison meetings take place with Public Health England.

3.8.2 The resource required for these activities is estimated at **0.03 FTE**.

3.9 Food Safety Promotion

3.9.1 The Food Safety Officers will, subject to available resources, carry out food safety promotional work through participation in certain national campaigns and local projects, more specifically:

- It is intended to examine opportunities to participate in appropriate schemes, deliver talks, and provide displays for suitable groups or at events or locations throughout the year
- National Obesity Strategy working with Public Health
- Seeking small grants from the Food Standards Agency to carry out bespoke projects

3.9.2 The resource required for these activities is estimated at **0.03 FTE**.

3.10 Administration

3.10.1 The Service's central Support Services team provides administration support.

3.11 Management

3.11.1 The Head of Environmental Health & Trading Standards Service provides overall management of all services in EHTS. The Food Team is managed by the Food Team Leader with support from 1 PEHO who also has fieldwork duties but has been seconded to the Food for Health team and their position partly back-filled by a contractor. Management accounts for approximately **0.8 FTE**.

4.0 Resources

4.1 Financial Allocation

4.1.1 The Food Safety financial allocation is part of the EHTS Food Team cost centre.

4.1.2 Training costs are included in the Employee related expenses and a number of free courses were run by the Food Standards Agency though they will not be offering any training courses in the future.

4.1.3 Provision of other central, directorate support services which includes legal services is added at the end of the financial year to service costs. This recharge is on a divisional basis and not broken down into individual teams.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

4.2.1 The staffing for food safety work, is as follows:

0.2 x Head of Environmental Health & Trading Standards Service

1x Food Team Leader

1 x Principal Environmental Health Officer (PEHO) (1 seconded to Healthy Eating – post partly covered by contract EHO)

2 x Senior Environmental Health Officer (SEHO)

3 x Environmental Health Officer (EHO) – 1 vacant post

2 x Food Safety Officer (FSO)

1x Healthy Eating Project Lead (Seconded PEHO) – funded until April 2018

(Total Technical Staff as of 17/18 = **10.2 FTE**)

(Total Technical Staff required for work identified in plan = 13.79 FTE)

4.2.3 Additional resources located outside of the EHTS Food Team are as follows:

TSO/CSO –Animal Feeding-stuffs – resources allocated as required

Environmental Health & Trading Standards Food & Trading Standards Teams share administration resources:

Food Safety allocation is approximately: (This is split between hygiene and standards as part of the LAEMS return).

1 x Senior Support Services Manager (0.1 FTE)

1 x Support Services Manager (0.25 FTE)

4.5 x Administration Officers (1.125 FTE)

(Total Admin staff = **1.475 FTE**)

4.2.5 Authorisation and competencies

Head of Environmental Health & Trading Standards Service /PEHOs/EHOs:

- Fully qualified to Diploma/Degree level
- Authorised to inspect all categories (with the exception of any officers who have not been qualified for 6 months or have insufficient experience and competencies)
- Take all levels of enforcement action (with the exception of any officers who do not have the required competencies or are Food Safety Officers)

4.3 Staff Development Plan

4.3.1 The Council uses its Performance Development and Review Scheme (PDR) to:

- Set individual aims and objectives for staff.
- Monitor and appraise performance.
- Assess the development needs of all staff.

At the start of the performance year all staff will have their own Personal Plan, which will comprise their main objectives with targets and their own development plan.

4.3.2 Individual and Team training plans reflect the following:

- Common training issues for the service
- Training issues linked to Corporate and Directorate priorities
- Training linked to new legislation, professional developments
- Training relating to organisational matters (IT, systems and procedures)

4.3.3 Training for the financial year 2017/18 is prioritised as follows:

Food Issues

Update Seminars – providing technical information on food safety topics

Use of free online training facility from the Food Standards Agency in particular:

Traceability, Labelling, Root Cause Analysis, Vacuum Packing and Allergens

Consistency of scoring for the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

Use of the new Enforcement powers to stop business activities (RAN)

General Issues

Investigation techniques – general training for successful investigations, due to the increase in enforcement

Interviewing under caution – aimed at newly qualified staff to enable they feel confident in undertaking such legal processes

Working with the third sector

4.4 Allocation of Resources

4.4.1 **Table 5** in **Annex A** sets out the total resources available (i.e. **10.2 FTE** officers) and how the resources identified to complete the plan in 2016/17 were allocated. The table also sets out the resources required to fulfil the plan for 2017/18.

4.4.2 Section **6.0** of this Plan sets out the achievements of the team in 2016/17

4.4.3 The areas of work which were not completed were:

- Primary Authority Partnerships – no formal agreements were established. There was no demand from businesses to sign up to a formal agreement. However, we have continued to provide informal agreements and advice to businesses.
- Programmed inspections were 85% of those due inspections for hygiene banded A-E and Unrated and 76% for due standards inspections rated A to C and Unrated.
- The Team concentrated on the higher risk premises to ensure food safety (i.e. 97% inspection rate for higher risk premises (A-C) due for hygiene). The inspections that have not been done will be carried forward into 2017/18

- Standards inspections were led by the due date of the hygiene inspections. In some cases, Standards inspections fall due when hygiene is not due, and since they are a secondary concern, they are sometimes carried forward to the next inspection date.

5.0 Quality Assessment

5.1 The measures to be taken by the EHTS Food Team Management to assess quality and promote consistency include:

- Desktop reviews of proactive and reactive case paperwork and files will be undertaken by the Food Team Leader
- New or Agency staff will be inducted into the departments procedures and shadowed on inspections to ensure competency and consistency
- All staff will have a 6-8 weekly 1 to 1 with their immediate supervisor to discuss casework
- Accompanied inspections will be carried out with each member of staff
- Documented procedures
- Bi -monthly documented team meeting
- Occasional training sessions and other exercises which are organised to aid consistency, staff appraisals and 6 month reviews
- Monthly monitoring reports will be produced using the CIVICA software system.

6.0 Review

6.1 Review against the Service Plan

6.1.1 The Head of Environmental Health & Trading Standards Service presents reports to the Service Management Team on performance of the food safety inspections against performance targets detailed in the Service Plan.

6.1.2 At the end of the financial year, a performance review is carried out by the Food Team Leader with input from team members, which will include information on the past year's performance and progress on any specified performance targets, service improvements and targeted outcomes. It will also identify service priorities for the coming year. The review of 2016/17 is set out in 6.17 below.

6.2 Identification of any variance from the Service Plan.

6.2.1 Any variance in meeting the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan is identified in the review in 6.4 together with any reasons for the variance. Where necessary any variance will be addressed in this year's plan.

6.3 Areas of Improvement

6.3.1 Where a service improvement or a service development is identified as part of the review process or through quality assessments, it will be incorporated into this year's plan. Key areas for improvement identified from the review are detailed in paragraph 6.17.

6.4 Inspection Programmes

6.4.1 97% of all food hygiene premises (Bands A-C) that were due for inspection had a food hygiene intervention. For the highest risk premises this was 100% A risk and 100% B risk. All overdue C premises (50) have been carried forward to the 2016/17 programme.

6.4.2 335 re-inspections were carried out, this is a decrease from 403 the previous year. Taking into account that 2290 programmed inspections were carried out this loosely equates to 15 % of inspections warranted a re-inspection.

6.4.3 76% of the food standards inspection programme was carried out – most were food standards inspections that fall due alongside food hygiene inspections. The remaining were not carried out as hygiene inspections were not due or the premises had been assessed as low risk.

6.5 Enforcement

6.5.1 6 (11 in the previous year) businesses or individuals were prosecuted as a result of either programmed inspections or complaint inspections. This resulted in total fines and costs awarded of £ 93,159.69 (£58,410.80 in the previous year)

6.5.2 117 (102 in the previous year) formal improvement notices were issued.

6.5.3 There were 11 Emergency prohibitions or voluntary closures in 2016/17. All were closures of a business for uncontrolled pest infestations in 2015/16 there were 4 emergency prohibitions or voluntary closures.

6.6 Additional Priorities

6.6.1 Regular early morning inspections were carried out at Billingsgate Market. Programmed inspections were carried out as well as general supervision of the market. All Traders have now received their approval to trade at the market.

6.7 Food Complaints/Requests for Service

6.7.1 A total of 1532 service requests were received (up from 1171 for 14/15 and 1328 in 15/16).

6.7.2 The main types of complaints received were: were 222 with regards to food poisoning complaints concerning food premises in the Borough (an increase from 124 last year), 99 about pest infestations (an increase from 96 last year), 101 for poor hygiene practices (81 last year), 24 for cleanliness of premises (the same as last year), and 201 complaints were received about food standards issues, such as food labelling (Use by dates, allergens etc.) (an increase from 145 last year).

6.7.3 A significant number of requests have been received from food business operators who wish to have their premises re-inspected in accordance with the provisions of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, in order to attempt to improve their score. In 2015/16, it was 56 such requests and 52 for 2016/17.

6.7.4 A re-inspection can be requested when a food business operator provides evidence that sufficient works have been carried out to comply with the legislation they were lacking on the original inspection. Once Officers are satisfied by the evidence provided that works have been progressed then an inspection will take place no sooner than 3 months after the original inspection to enable a sustainable improvement. Officers make an unannounced visit no later than 3 months after the standstill period and carry out a full inspection

6.8 Home Authority Principle

6.8.1 No formal Home Authority or Primary Authority Partnerships were established during the year due to the demands of other areas of work. However, a number of the contacts from outside bodies were Home Authority enquiries from other authorities. Each of these was dealt with as appropriate and in line with the Home Authority Principle.

6.9 Advice to Business

6.9.1 Business packs for new businesses continued to be issued, along with a booklet giving advice on carrying out a hazard analysis.

6.10 Food Inspection & Sampling

6.10.1 162 food samples were taken, of which there were 53 failures. All of these failures were subsequently followed up by warning letter and further sampling.

- 6.10.2 A full Sampling Plan has been produced for 2017/18. The Sampling Policy is detailed in Annex D and is a required to be approved as part of the Food Law Plan.
- 6.11 Outbreak Control & Infectious Disease Control
- 6.11.1 Some 222 service requests were investigated specific to incidents of alleged food poisoning originating from food consumed in the borough. There were several outbreaks identified/confirmed during the year that allegedly affected up to 800 people mainly due to Norovirus. Large scale, multi-agency investigations ensued. All premises were sampled extensively. There was a notification of a restaurant being linked to 16 people falling ill with Salmonellosis. There are still a number of Typhoid and Paratyphoid infections that are reported via Public Health England and contact tracing is undertaken to avoid outbreaks.
- 6.12 Food Alerts
- 6.12.1 53 Food Alerts were received from the Food Standards Agency (the same number as the previous year). A Food Alert is a national alert on certain food stuffs i.e. contamination, food labelling deficiency. Most of these did not require any action, however a number did result in the issue of Press Releases to notify the public, some required a large number of businesses to be notified in writing, and some required officer visits/sampling.
- 6.12.2 Food Alerts: For Action attract a high priority and immediate response. When they happen, resources have to be diverted from other food enforcement functions to facilitate the necessary action. This can impact on the target outputs of the Plan. The horse meat scandal pulled team resources into tracking down traceability of meat across the Borough, throughout the country, and throughout Europe. A sampling programme was also undertaken in liaison with the FSA.
- 6.13 Liaison with Other Organisations
- 6.13.1 The food safety unit fulfilled all of its liaison activities in the 2016/17 Plan and carried out benchmarking each quarter to assess our performance against neighbouring Authorities.
- 6.14 Food Safety Promotion
- 6.14.1 Promotional activities on food hygiene were undertaken. Food businesses were provided with advice and the chance to take the level 2 certificate training in food hygiene.
- 6.14.2 Several press releases and mail merged information letters/alerts were produced throughout the year.

6.15 Staffing

6.15.1 The team was fully staffed during most of the year. Earlier in the year there was a loss of an Environmental Health Officer and this post was filled by an EHO working as an FSO. The Team Leader post became permanent the Principal Environmental Health Officer was recruited on an interim basis. The remaining FSO has also vacated the post and is currently being advertised and so there were periods where these posts were empty in between recruitment. A senior EHO was seconded into the Food for Health team. Whilst this position was back filled, it was filled with a contract EHO, not a Senior Officer.

6.16 Training

6.16.1 The food safety officers undertook a wide range of training activities during the year, these included:

- Sampling
- Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points
- Personal Safety
- Gas Safety
- Legal updates
- Auditing food premises
- Microbiology
- Contamination
- Bivalve molluscs
- Nutrition & labelling

6.16.2 Quality Assessment

6.16.3 Documented team meetings took place.

6.16.4 Monthly monitoring reports are produced on a regular basis

6.17 Key areas for Improvement/Development

6.17.1 Professional Development of Food Safety Officers and newly qualified Environmental Health Officers as it is now written into the Food Law Code of Practice that officers must maintain their competence and complete a minimum of 20 hours per year CPD (10 hours core and 10 hours supplementary).

- 6.17.2 Working with the private markets to control the hazards produced by stall holders and to obtain up to date trading details. The code of practice has altered and there will be much more administration required to contact registered authorities to ask if premises should be inspected on their behalf and the information shared.
- 6.17.3 Procedures are systematically reviewed and completed and kept up to date.
- 6.17.4 Quality monitoring is continuing and staff have been requested to undertake a training needs analysis.
- 6.17.5 Development of enforcement strategies for low risk premises such as D rated food safety premises and broadly compliant C premises.
- 6.17.6 Consistency training for staff in relation to the Food Hygiene Rating Schemes
- 6.17.7 Development of our database with regards to Sampling data, UKFSS, a central shared database
- 6.17.8 Development of hand held/tablet computer IT systems
- 6.17.9 Revisits are to continue as this has resulted in enforcement action being taken when advice has not been followed.

7.0 **Annexes**

- Annex A: Assessment of resources
- Annex B: Current Council Decision Making Structure
- Annex C: Current Council Corporate Structure
- Annex D: Food Sampling Policy 2017/2018

Annex A

Assessment of Resources for 2017/2018

Table 5

Estimation of Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

1 year	365 days
Annual Leave	31 days
Training / team meetings	24 days
Bank Holidays/Statutory leave	12 days
Sick leave/dependency/Special leave etc	5 days
Weekends	104 days
Downtime – reading, research etc.	18 days
Officer Administration	10 days
Number of working days	161 days
1 FTE	161 days (1127 hours)

Programmed Inspections (HYGIENE)

High risk premises (Cat A, B and not broadly compliant premises) = **551** inspections due (Table 4 as Total Inspections), at 3 ½ hours per inspection (this is in line with the average London authority – LFGG bench marking exercise), therefore **1928** hours to inspect 100%.

Broadly compliant Category C and D premises (includes the 14 E rated premises to be done) = **962** inspections (Table 4 as Surveillance Inspections) due at 1.5 hours per inspection, therefore **1443** hours to inspect 100%.

Total for inspections/surveillance therefore = **3371** hours (**482 days**)

Low risk (E hygiene) premises are likely to be subject to alternative enforcement strategies:

Allow 5 hrs for management of scheme. Allow 0.25 hrs per premises (**346**) for implementation of scheme

Total for Alternative Enforcement Strategies = **86** hrs (**12 days**)

Approval inspection on processes of HACCP **74** premises @ 14 hours = **966**hrs (**138 days**)

Resource required to achieve 100% inspection rate (total **632**) days = **3.9 FTE**.

Programmed Inspections (STANDARDS)

High risk premises (Cat A) = 15 inspections due (Table 4). 11 of these will be inspected during hygiene inspections, at ½ hour per inspection (this is in line with the average London authority – LFGG bench marking exercise). 4 will be inspected as standards only as hygiene is not due at 2 ½ hour per inspection (this is in line with the average London authority – LFGG bench marking exercise). Therefore 5.5 hours to inspect the 11 A's due alongside hygiene inspections,
10 hours to inspect 4 A's due for standards only.
100% of A's inspected = Total of 15.5 hours (2.2 days) = **0.03 FTE**.

As stated previously efficiency is gained as medium to low risk food standard inspections are undertaken in the year that the food hygiene is due. 601 B's due, but 331 due alongside hygiene. 64 C's due, but 25 due alongside hygiene.

Other programmed inspections (B and C) due with hygiene = 356. At ½ hour per inspection 167 hours required = 24 days = **0.15 FTE**.
B inspections where no hygiene due = 279. At 2½ hours per inspection 697.5 hours required = 100 days = **0.62 FTE**.

Low risk (C standards) premises are likely to be subject to alternative enforcement strategies:

Allow 5 hrs for management of scheme. Allow 0.25 hrs per premises (124 C's not due for hygiene) for implementation of scheme = 31 hours = 4.4 days = **0.03 FTE**

Resource required to achieve 100% inspection rate (total 269.6) days = **0.83 FTE**.

Re inspections following programmed hygiene inspections

All Category A premises will require a revisit as will premises that fall out of the broadly compliant range.

A = 68 @ 3.5hrs = 238 hrs (34 days)

Premises falling out of broadly compliant category = 380 (Number based on mid-point between RVs carried out last year (399) v projected number of non B/C inspections from 16/17 inspections (361))

380 @ 3.5 hours = 1330 hours (190 days)

Resource required for re inspections = 210 days = **2.1 FTE**

Re inspections following programmed standards inspections

Food standards inspections revisits 22 @ 2hrs = 44hrs (6.3 days)

Resources required for food standard revisits = **0.04 FTE**

Service requests

It is expected that some 1000 food safety related service requests will be received during the year. It is estimated that each will take an average of 1.5 hrs, therefore 1500 hrs will be required to deal with these.

Total for Service Requests 1500 hours (214 days)

In addition:

50 Planning Applications @ 1 hr each = 50 hrs

Total time for Planning Applications = 50 hrs (7 days)

40 Premises Licence Applications @ 0.5 hr each = 20 hrs

Total time for Premises Licence Applications = 20 hrs (3 days)

100 food alerts @ 0.5 hr each = 50 hrs

10% approx will require extensive investigations etc. 10 @ approx. 3.5 hrs each = 35 hrs

Total time for Food Alerts = 85 hrs (12 days)

Approximately 150 new premises to open during year @ 3 ½ hrs each = 525 hrs

Total time for New Premises = 525 hrs (75 days)

Total for Service Requests = 311 days = **1.93 FTE**

Home Authority Premises

There are approximately 200 premises considered to be either Home or Originating Authority. Most of these will simply be dealt with during routine inspections. However it is estimated that approximately 15 premises will require greater attention.

15 premises @ 7 hrs each = 105 hrs

185 premises @ 1 hr each = 185 hrs

Total time for Home Authority = 290 hrs (41.4 days) = **0.26 FTE**

Advice to Businesses

Throughout the year advice to business forums etc will be given on an ad-hoc basis

Ad-hoc support & advice = 250 hrs

Total for Business Advice & Support = 250 hrs (35 days) = **0.2 FTE**

Food Sampling

Sampling will be based on the Sampling Plan - which consists of a number of projects co-ordinated, by either: EU, PHE or the NE Sector Liaison Group, plus a number of local projects and home authority sampling.

180 samples @ average of 3 hrs per sample = 540 hours

Follow up to adverse results 20% = 36 @ 4 hours per sample = 144 hours

Total for Sampling = 684 hrs (97 days) = **0.6 FTE**

Outbreak Control

The resource required to deal with an outbreak will depend on the size and complexity of the incident. Estimated **0.02 FTE**.

Liaison

Attendance at Sector Group meetings, study groups etc and follow-up work = 5 days

Total resource required is = **0.03 FTE**

Food Safety Promotion

A number of initiatives are planned, as follows:

- Miscellaneous press releases and events @ 35 hrs (5 days)

Total time for Health Promotion = 35 hrs (5 days) = **0.03 FTE**

Other Activities

Inspections will be carried out at major festivals and outside events such as the Brick Lane Festival and events in Victoria Park.

Total for festivals 200hrs (28 days)

Billingsgate Market:

Allow 4 hrs per week for Proactive visits, including dealing with service requests.

Allow 125 hours for auditing approval standards

Total for Billingsgate Market = 333 hrs (47 days)

Imported Food Projects/Surveillance allow 300 hrs

Total for Imported Food Control = 300 hrs (43 days)

Approved Premises:

Allow 70 hrs for processing additional premises identified during year

Total for approved = 70 hrs (10 days)

Food Standards Projects:

Allow 140 hrs for Food Standards Projects

Total for Food Standards Projects = 140 hrs (20 days)

Approximately 20 closures @ up to 50 hrs each (inc of legal action) = 1000 hrs

Total time for Closures = 1000hrs (142 days)

Total for other activities = 290 days= **1.8 FTE**

Healthy Eating Funding

The Tower Hamlets Public Health grant funded the Food Service to the sum of £70,000 to deliver a Healthy Food Choices Award with the aim to reduce obesity within the Borough. This funding has enabled us to employ **1 FTE** to work on this project until March 2018.

Technical Support

The Food Safety Officers are responsible for supporting officers in their activities and for maintaining back-up systems and equipment and other resources. Along with their own inspection targets **0.25 FTE**

Admin Support

Admin support is provided by a generic admin function sitting within the Strategy and Resources Division of CLC.

Management

The Head of Service for Environmental Health & Trading Standards is responsible management functions across EHTS (0.1 FTE). The Food Team Leader is responsible for management functions in the Food Team (0.5 FTE). Also, approximately 0.2 FTE of the PEHO's time is accounted for in management functions. Total for management is therefore **0.8 FTE**

A summary of resources required to meet the requirements of the service plan for 2016/17, allowing Tower Hamlets to obtain a position in the top quartile of high performing councils in relation to the number of high risk inspections carried out that are due to be carried out is shown below in Table 6:

Table 6

Activity	Time identified to complete work in Service Plan (2014/2015)	Time identified to complete work in Service Plan (2015/2016)	Time identified to complete work in Service Plan (2016/17)	Time identified to complete work in Service Plan (2017/18)
Programmed Inspections (hyg)	3.7	3.1	3.5	3.9
Programmed Inspections (std)	Not accounted for other than As ↑	0.83	0.83	0.83
Re-inspections	2	2.1	2.1	2.1
Food standards re-inspections	0.02	0.04		0.04
Service Requests	1.9	1.93	1.93	1.93
Home Authority	0.25	0.26	0.26	0.26
Advice to businesses	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Food sampling	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Food Poisoning outbreaks	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Liaison	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
Food Safety Promotion	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
Other Activities	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
Technical Officer Support	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Management	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Healthy Eating Award	1	1	1	1
Total	12.6	12.99	13.35	13.79
	Actual availability	Actual availability	Actual availability	Actual availability
	10.7	10.7	10.2	10.2

Standards not accounted for separately in 14/15. The standards A inspections (13) and standards AES for C (412) was accounted for as a part of the programmed inspections section (3.7). The FSA have now asked us to separate this and account for standards work fully. It is now 0.83 FTE

Annex B ; Decision Making Structure:

Cabinet

Mayors Executive Decision Making

Council

Overview and Scrutiny

Health Scrutiny Panel

Inner North East London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Committees and Panels of Council

Appeal Committee

Appointments Sub Committee

Audit Committee

Development Committee

Freedom of Borough Ad hoc Panel

General Purposes Committee

Human Resources Committee

Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee

King Georges Field Charity Board

Licensing Committee

Licensing Sub Committee

Pensions Committee

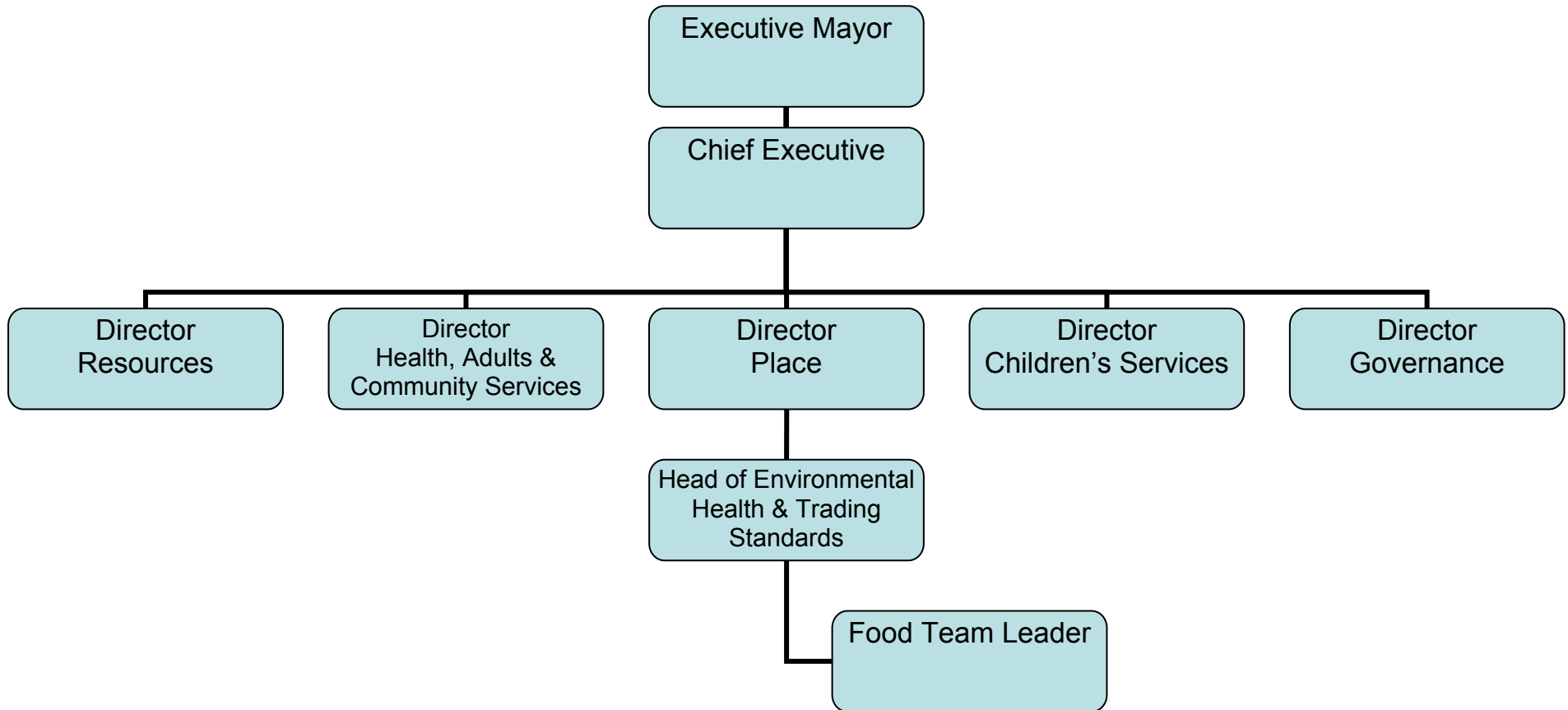
Standards (Advisory) Committee

Strategic Development Committee

Tower Hamlets Health and Wellbeing Board

Annex C

Corporate Structure



Annex D

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

FOOD SAMPLING POLICY 2017/18

It is a requirement of the Code of Practice, which outlines procedures for sampling made under the Food Safety Act 1990 and The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 that local authorities publish a sampling policy and outline programmes for each financial year.

In common with all London boroughs, Tower Hamlets is part of the London Food Co-ordinating Group (LFCG). This has been set up by ALEHM (Association of London Environmental Health Officers), previously the London Chief Environmental Health Officers' Association to co-ordinate the food enforcement function of London Boroughs.

Membership of the Group includes Environmental Health Officers, Public Analysts and a representative of the Health Protection Agency. One of the key functions of the Group is the co-ordination of food sampling in London – this is achieved by dividing the 33 London Boroughs into 4 regional sectors, with each sector arranging sampling programmes in its own area only after proper liaison with the other 3 sectors. Tower Hamlets is in the NE sector.

FOOD SAMPLING OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

The main objective of food sampling should be the protection of the consumer through the enforcement of food legislation and the encouragement of fair trading. In attempting to achieve this objective it is important that the Council considers the most effective use of limited resources. Therefore, the Council has identified its food sampling programmes in the following priority order:

- (i) Investigation of food poisoning outbreaks and food contamination incidents
- (ii) Complaints where sampling is necessary
- (iii) Imported food responsibilities
- (iv) Home authority responsibilities
- (v) EU co-ordinated sampling programme
- (vi) PHE sampling programme
- (vii) Co-ordinated programmed sampling – with other London Boroughs
- (viii) Local projects in individual boroughs

TYPES OF SAMPLES

There is a need for a common approach to sampling in the Borough, and this is set out as follows:

Random informal samples

- (i) These should be avoided for both chemical and microbiological samples.
- (ii) There is, however, a place for informal samples but principally within a programmed sampling project concentrating on a particular food issue.
- (iii) There will also be occasions when informal samples will be justified when testing a new product or process on the market.

Microbiological samples

- (i) Formal samples being taken in accordance with the Regulations should be the normal procedure.
- (ii) There are no advantages in taking informal microbiological samples – the procedures laid down in the Regulations are in any case good sampling practice and the additional information gathering required is minimal. However, only samples taken with the intention of legal proceedings in the event of adverse results should be submitted to the HPA as Formal samples. In these cases the relevant HPA Formal Sample form should be used.

Chemical samples

- (i) In view of the resource and time implications of taking formal chemical samples it is accepted that a significant amount of chemical sampling will be informal – this is especially the case when project or programmed sampling is being carried out as a monitoring or fact finding exercise.
- (ii) Formal samples should, however, be taken when:
 - Problems and contraventions of legislation are suspected
 - Results are not thought repeatable, e.g. pesticide residues or aflatoxins in food
 - In response to food complaints
 - Repeat sampling following a previous unsatisfactory informal sample

Sampling in manufacturing premises

- (i) The level and type of samples taken at individual manufacturing premises will depend on a number of factors including:
 - The nature of the raw materials, intermediate and finished products
 - The existence or absence of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) type procedures
 - The existence of in-house quality control systems
 - The level of in-house sampling and the quality of procedures and documentation
- (ii) It is important, however, to ensure that food sampling forms an integral part of routine inspections within the risk assessment system laid down in the relevant Code of Practice and LACORS guidance. Ad hoc samples taken without regard to the above and without set objectives and protocols should be avoided.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

It is wasteful of resources to carry out sampling without first considering and agreeing the objectives – this is especially the case for any sampling project or programme carried out in conjunction with other London Boroughs.

A sampling and analytical protocol should be prepared in conjunction with the selected laboratory in order to ensure an agreed procedure and to encourage a uniform approach. Clearly the subsequent status of the sampling will depend upon the objectives and protocol agreed.

The results and conclusions from the sampling exercise should be collated and circulated through sector groups. It is recognised that on occasions individual local authorities, sectors or the LFCG will want to consider wider publication.

LEVEL OF SAMPLING

Local authority sampling levels are closely monitored by the Food Standards Agency through returns. This data will be aggregated and returned to Brussels in accordance with the Official Control of Foodstuffs Directive.

CO-ORDINATION

In order to achieve maximum effectiveness and the best use of scarce resources, the Council should ensure that food sampling, other than for reactive duties such as complaints, food poisoning and port health and home authority duties, is carried out in conjunction with the LFCG.

Proposed sampling projects should be cleared initially through the relevant sectors. Sector co-ordinators will be in a position to ensure that other sectors are not proposing to carry out similar surveys – this will avoid duplication.

Reports of surveys should be passed through sectors and ultimately through the LFCG in order to ensure a wide distribution and a sharing of information. UKFSS implementation will aid with information sharing.

SUMMARY

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that the Council protects the consumer, and in so doing follows good practice and uses scarce resources in the most effective way.

The Policy is intended only as a guide. It is flexible enough to allow initiative, but points the way forward to a more locally based approach to food sampling.

Nothing in the Food Sampling Policy is intended to preclude initiative on the part of individual enforcement officers – there will be occasion, in circumstances of constant market change, when ad hoc sampling will be necessary.

