



City of Wolverhampton Council
Food Service Plan
2018



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Introduction

Welcome to the 18th Statutory Food Service Plan for the City of Wolverhampton.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) Framework Agreement, which was developed in close partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA), requires the annual production of the Statutory Food Service Plan. The Agreement applies to local enforcement of all food laws, and incorporates the latest guidance and standards on food law enforcement.

The Plan has been reviewed in accordance with the FSA's Service Planning guidance for Food Law Enforcement and the guidance contained in the Food Law Code of Practice (England) and guidance. The FSA also requires the service plan be submitted for Member approval to ensure local transparency and accountability. All formal actions arising from interventions taken under the provisions of the Plan will be compliant with the BRDO Regulators Code.



The Plan is not a stand-alone document; it is an integral part of the Council's service delivery programme. It stands alongside other service specific plans such as the Health and Safety Plan and provides details of the proposed service programme for 2018 and sits within the overall Performance Management arrangements for Business Services. All the Service Plans are aligned to the Council's corporate performance and financial planning frameworks.

The service is committed to working towards the inspection and intervention regime prescribed by the Food Standards Agency. Demands on resources in previous years has resulted in a back log of interventions at lower risk establishments. Additional resources have been acquired for 2018 enabling the Service to employ a contractor to undertake Food Hygiene and Food Standards interventions at these premises.

An additional two officers have been appointed to undertake interventions at food hygiene and food standards premises. It is anticipated that this combined with the use of contractors will ensure that due interventions will be carried out at all of the premises within the City.

Whilst it is envisaged that the Service will meet the requirements of the programme this year. The focus will continue to be on the higher risk businesses detailed on the programme.

An audit of the Food Hygiene Service and delivery focusing on service organisation, management and internal monitoring arrangements was carried out by the Food Standards Agency on the 21 September 2017. This has led to the service reviewing our approach to businesses and the level of free support we are able to offer them.

Should you have any comments or views with respect to this plan please forward these to the **Head of Service; Colin Parr, Civic Centre, St. Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1DA**



Service wheel:
existing services and priority areas



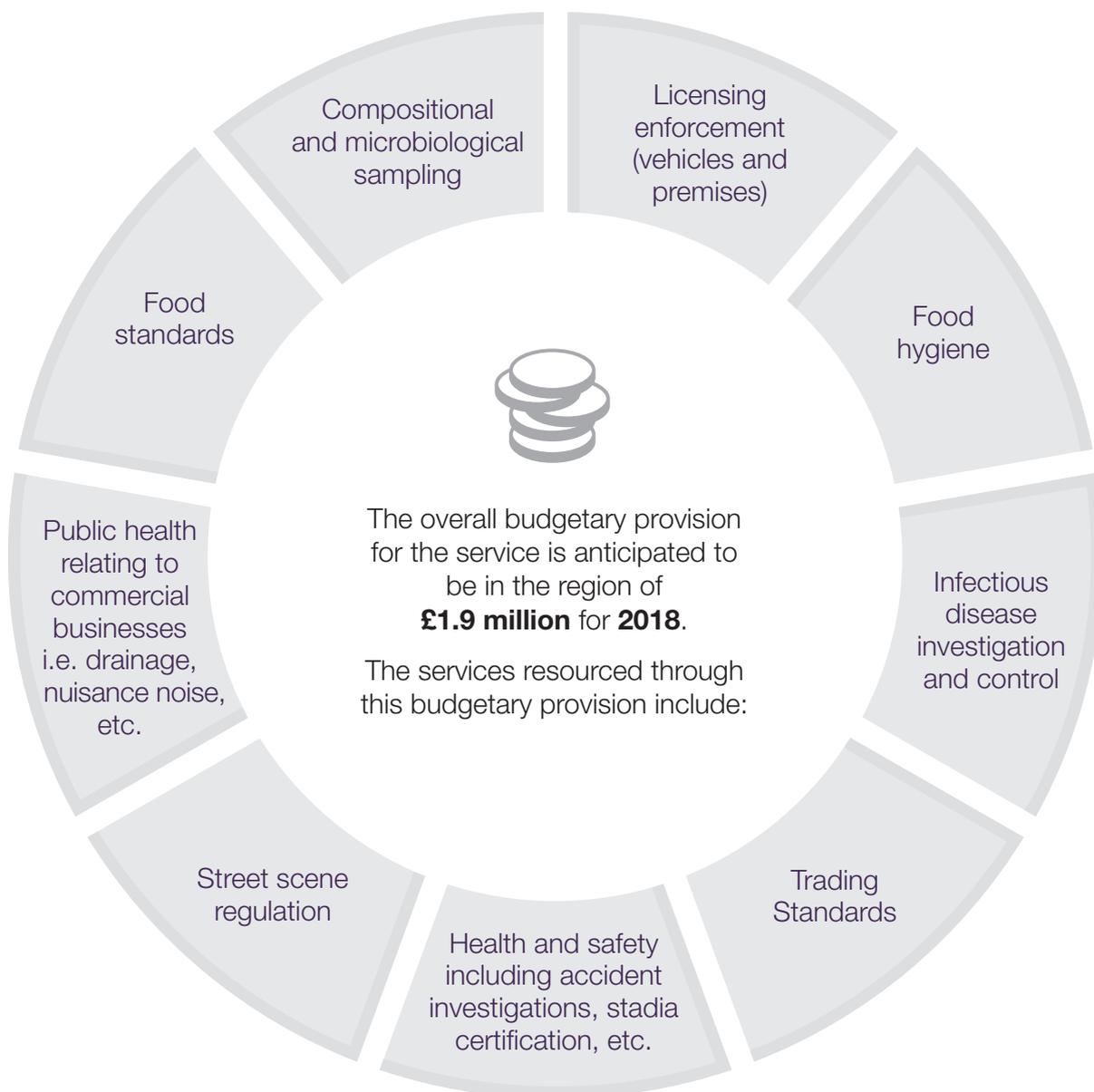
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Summary

The Statutory Food Service Plan sets out how the City of Wolverhampton Council will work over the coming year to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and quality of food prepared and sold in Wolverhampton is of the highest standard.

The plan meets the requirements laid down by the Food Standards Agency and is designed to ensure that local people and residents can clearly see what the service does, how our services are delivered and the resources we have to do this.

Services Resourced



Monitoring

The monitoring of performance against the Service Plan is detailed in the plan and involves the Head of Service, Service Leads and employee groups. In addition, there is external review of performance through the statutory return to the Food Standards Agency.

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Service Aims and Objectives

Aims

Through the effective and efficient use of the resources allocated, to help food businesses provide safe food and ensure that the quality of food prepared and sold in Wolverhampton is of the highest standard.

Objectives

In achieving the aims we will:

- Register, approve and licence, as appropriate, relevant food premises.
- Maintain appropriate food premises intervention programmes which comply with all requirements set out in legislation.
- Respond to and investigate food safety and standards complaints, requests for information made by both business persons and private individuals and complaints of a public health nature, relating to food premises.
- Make appropriate responses to national food alerts identified by the FSA.
- Support the BEIS Primary and Home Authority Principle.
- Support the workings of the Central England Environmental Health Partnership, West Midlands Food Liaison Group, and the Central England Trading Standards Authorities Food Group.
- Maintain appropriate food sampling regimes which comply with relevant statutory provisions and national guidance.
- Investigate reported cases and outbreaks of infectious disease and support the work of Public Health England in this respect.
- Have regard to enforcement which is helpful, consistent and proportionate and does not impose unnecessary burden, as set out in the Black Country Regulators Operating Framework.
- Ensure all actions and decisions taken by employees and Councillors are undertaken in an open and transparent fashion with due regard to the Council's policies on equality.
- Ensure that all investigations leading to legal proceedings are completed in accordance with the principles of natural justice and fairness.
- Ensure appropriate monitoring, reporting and response to the actual implementation and delivery of the agreed Service Plan.

Service Statement

As part of our commitment to quality service provision each service is required to produce a Service Statement. The Service Statement for Business Services is detailed overleaf –



Service Statement

OUR SERVICE

Business Services enforces the law through a programme of interventions and investigations in respect of food and other commercial businesses. It provides information and advice to businesses, customers and other consumers.

This service is also responsible for health and safety, infectious disease control, licensing enforcement, 'street scene' enforcement matters and trading standards issues.

The Service receives approximately 2000 requests for service each year. In addition to dealing with requests and complaints we carry out programmed regulation of shops and businesses in Wolverhampton. Our services are responsible for ensuring you are treated fairly and your health and environment are protected.

OUR COUNCIL

Business Services is responsible for delivering some of the Council's statutory duties. In discharging these duties we strive to contribute to the corporate customer service standards, the Council's core values and community priorities.

Our service contributes to the Council's core values in many ways. Our service plans set the highest standards for us to work to. In our dealings with the public and trade we act in accordance with the principles of the Compliance Code ensuring equality and fairness to all combined with honesty, transparency and accountability.

The objectives of these services are protecting people and the environment and, through engaging stakeholders and colleagues in other agencies, we build partnerships. By protecting the social, economic and environmental conditions within the City and by minimising nuisance to neighbourhoods and protecting the health of people at work and play our service contributes to the Council's strategic goals of developing a stronger economy and stronger communities. By providing advice, support and training to the public and other Council services we also contribute to the strategic goal of encouraging a confident, capable and championing City.

Links to Corporate Issues

In order to achieve continuous service improvement and strive for performance capable of achieving a sustainable future which reflects the political priorities and values of partners within Wolverhampton, it is important that the statutory service plan links itself visibly to the overall corporate objectives.

Business Services produces two service delivery plans detailing the work of the service. They cover the work of the Food Hygiene and Standards Service and the Health and Safety Service.

These service plans contribute to the overall service plan for the PLACE directorate by forming the foundation of work for the service area.

Approval and Review Process

The service plan is subject to approval and scrutiny by the Service Director for City Environment and the Cabinet Member for City Environment.

Progress with delivery of the Plan is monitored on a regular basis by Business Services Management Team. The directorate Performance Management Board also monitor performance against KPIs on a monthly basis.

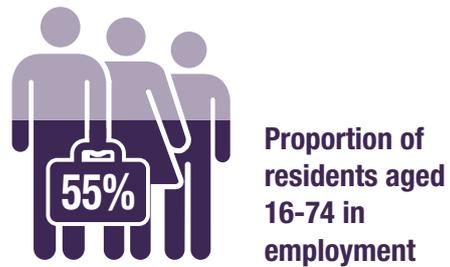
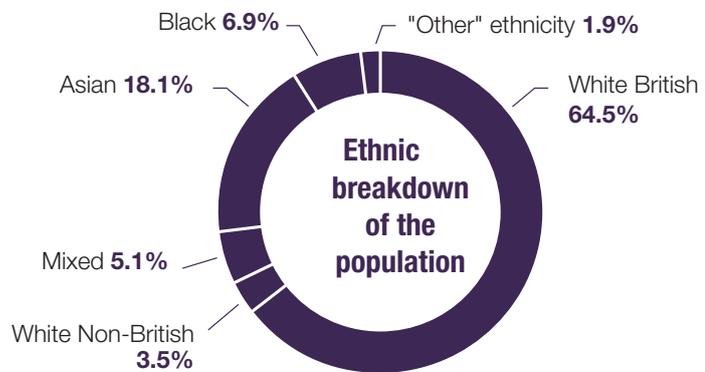


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Background Information

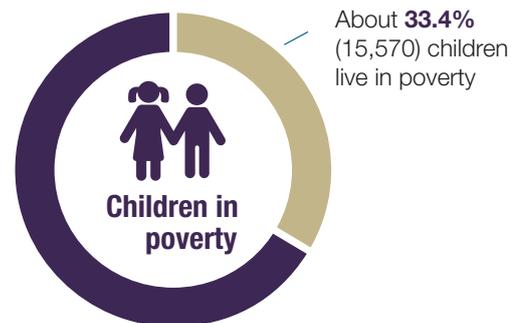
Authority Profile (Based on the 2011 Census)

The City of
Wolverhampton has
a population of
252,987



Life expectancy for both men and women is lower than the England average.

Wolverhampton is in the **6% most deprived areas** in the country and the levels of deprivation in the City continue to rise.





The Means by which the Service is Delivered

The political structure of the Council is made up of a leader, Cabinet, Cabinet Panels, Scrutiny Panels and committees. The Cabinet is part of the Executive decision making process and is made up of ten Councillors and is chaired by the Leader of the Council. Each Cabinet Member has a specific area of responsibility, a portfolio. Decisions about the day to day running of Council services are taken by the Cabinet within the framework of the Council's Constitution, budget and plans approved by the Council.

Business Services, which sits within the City Environment group of services in the Place directorate, falls under the remit of the Cabinet Member for City Environment along with Waste Services, Public Realm Services, and Bereavement Services.

In line with shared priorities developed between Central Government and the Local Government Association, Wolverhampton's priorities are:

Stronger Economy

Stronger Communities

Stronger Organisation

Scope of the Food Service

The City of Wolverhampton Council's Food Service undertakes:

- Programmed Interventions, which include full or part inspections, microbiological and compositional sampling of food, education and advisory visits to food businesses with respect to food hygiene and food standards.
- Operation of the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (NFHRS)
- Development and maintenance of an 'alternative enforcement strategy' for food businesses for both food hygiene and food standards
- Responses to food complaints,
- Response to nuisance complaints and related issues in connection with food business,
- Response to food alerts, warnings and other food incidents,
- Response to, and determination of, licence applications in relation to food businesses
- Investigation of allegations of food fraud
- Promotion of food related health matters
- Commitment of resources to the LGR, Home Authority Principle, Local Better Regulatory Office and Primary Authority Partnership,
- Commitment to the BEIS Better Business for All initiative
- Response to cases and outbreaks of actual and suspected food related infectious disease.
- Provision of advice and assistance to other local authorities and enforcement bodies
- Enforcement of the Health Act 2006, Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005
- Consultee role to planning applications.

The service is also responsible for discharging the authority's functions in relation to health and safety at work, infectious disease control, licensing issues and nuisance arising from waste, drainage and noise from food and licenced commercial premises.

Feeding stuffs enforcement is delivered in partnership with South Staffordshire County Council who are responsible for undertaking enforcement compliance in this area.

Development of the Food Hygiene Service

On 21 September 2017 an audit of food hygiene service delivery took place. The audit focused on service Organisation, Management and Internal Monitoring arrangements. The audit identified that the authority was found to be meeting many requirements set by the Food Standards Agency. The auditors recognised that the Service was provided by highly trained and competent officers, who utilised a range of enforcement activities to bring about business compliance. They appreciated that we had focused our resources on high risk businesses and that we had completed 100% of the required interventions with these businesses.

There were however some areas which required action following the audit:

- All food businesses should be risk rated following the initial visit.
 - Interventions should be carried out at all food hygiene establishments at a frequency, which is set out in the food law code of practice.
 - Service plans should include a backlog of overdue interventions. Any variance shall be addressed by the authority in the subsequent service plan.
- The authority should have sufficient numbers of authorised officers to carry out all food hygiene law activities required by the framework agreement and code of practice.
 - A procedure should be developed to ensure that food premises database is accurate, up to date and reliable.

The findings of the audit and demands on resources have resulted in the Service changing it's approach and businesses are now risk rated on their first visit. The service is no longer able to undertake repeated visits to businesses prior to risk rating. The service will also be employing contractors to inspect any premises which have no received an inspection in 2017.

In order to enable the continuation of business support the Service will be exploring charging businesses for consultancy Services. This will enable officers to spend as much time as the business requires to improve

The authority will also be developing charges for businesses who require re-rating under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

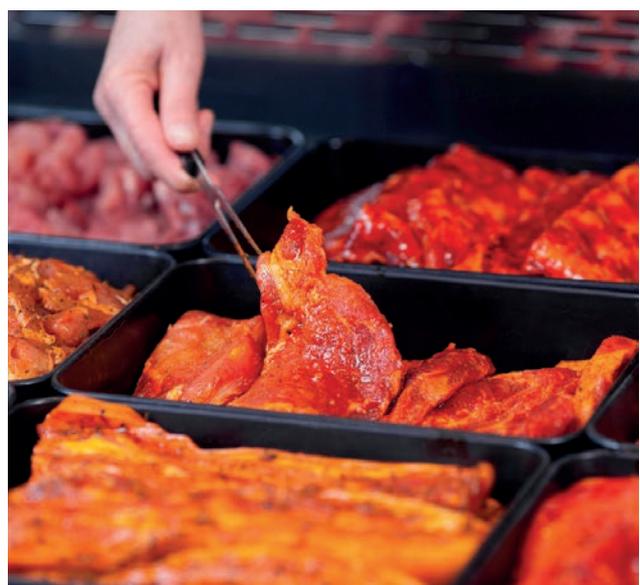
Profile of Food Service (As of April 2018)

Enforcement of Regulations on food standards, safety and hygiene is primarily the responsibility of local authorities, however The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have responsibility for food hygiene enforcement in slaughterhouses, cutting premises, farmed and wild game facilities and co-located minced meat and meat products premises. Local Authorities retain responsibility for food standards enforcement within these premises.

The food premises profile for Wolverhampton is set out in the table alongside.

The food premises data base of Wolverhampton is currently stored within an I.T. platform called IDOX.

Premises Type	Total Number of Premises
Caring establishments	211
Distributors & transporters	0
Hotel/guest house	22
Importers and exporters	0
Manufacturers and packers	35
Mobile food unit	76
Primary producer	1
Pub Club	188
Restaurant and caterers other	605
Retailers(other)	201
Schools/college	105
Small retailer	606
Supermarket/Hypermarket	48
Take-away	273
Wholesalers	10
Totals	2381



Profile of Food Service – Feeding stuffs

The authority has entered into a partnership with Staffordshire County Council, who have now assumed responsibility for undertaking enforcement compliance within this area.

45 premises undertake the activity of production, storage or handling of feedstuff(s) for animals.

Regulatory and Compliance Policy

This is the overarching compliance policy document was approved by Cabinet in October 2014. It has regard to human rights issues and incorporates the principles contained in the Governments BIS / BRDO Regulators Code.

The Black Country Regulators Operating Framework, comprising Service Charter, Regulatory & Compliance Policy and Service Standards has now been adopted by all four Black Country authorities.

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Service Delivery

What businesses should expect when a member of staff undertakes an inspection

Staff undertaking food safety work will:

- ✓ Identify themselves by name and title, showing proof of ID if required and give contact details when necessary

- ✓ Be helpful and courteous

- ✓ Carry out their duties in a fair, equitable and consistent manner in accordance with the Council's Enforcement and Equal Opportunities Policies.

- ✓ Help food businesses in providing safe food for their customers. Discuss and assist in the compliance with legislation, applying a risk based and appropriate approach.

- ✓ Tailor the intervention to the business's needs, minimising the cost of compliance by ensuring any action required is proportionate to the risk.

- ✓ Encourage businesses to seek advice, information and encourage two way communication.

- ✓ Provide information about the Council's complaints procedures and any official appeals procedures as appropriate.

- ✓ Issue a report, where non-compliance with the relevant legislation is found.

- ✓ Advise on future changes in relevant legislation and requirement/obligations on food business.

Intervention Programmes

In accordance with the FSA Food Law Code of Practice food premises in Wolverhampton are subject to an intervention in order to establish that food related activities carried out within the premises comply with food law.

The use of interventions was incorporated in UK law through the requirements made under EU Regulation 882/2004 Article 10 and further through the FSA Food Law Code of Practice. Interventions are defined as activities that are designed to monitor, support and increase food law compliance within a food establishment. They include but are not restricted to “official controls” and are carried out using a risk based approach, which is set out within the FSA Food Law Code of Practice.

There are currently two separate inspection programmes relating to food hygiene and food standards, however for the majority of businesses in Wolverhampton, food standards interventions are normally undertaken at the same time as food hygiene interventions. This is because, for most businesses, the issues of labelling, composition and quality are interlinked with those of the food hygiene and safety and are therefore dealt with during one intervention. However, for larger manufacturing businesses and cutting plants etc (where the Council does not enforce hygiene legislation)

separate food standards interventions are arranged.

The adoption of this approach has meant that although all businesses are rated for food standards risk under FSA Food Law Code of Practice, the intervention programme is generally driven by the frequency of food hygiene intervention. The inevitable consequence is that some food standards interventions will be undertaken slightly early and some slightly late. In order to minimise the effect of this on statistical returns a general rule is followed whereby if a food standards intervention will be overdue at 31 March if not carried out at the same time as a food hygiene intervention, it should be done early rather than late.

Serious or significant food standards breaches will be followed up by appropriate intervention and when necessary formal action e.g. prosecution, simple caution etc.

Both programmes adhere to the premises rating schemes contained within the statutory Food Law Codes of Practice produced by the FSA. Using the number of premises in each risk band and the associated inspection frequency, it is possible to estimate the number of inspections due in any given period. The number of revisits is a function of the levels of compliance identified during an initial visit and any enforcement policy decisions.

The Intervention Programme is central to food law compliance, and Local Authorities must ensure that such a programme is appropriately resourced. The purpose of food hygiene inspections is to find out if food being handled and produced hygienically; is safe to eat; and to identify factors which have the potential to cause food poisoning or injury. Failure to adequately resource the food programme would result in some premises not receiving an inspection and operating in a manner which could cause harm to public health.

It is estimated that an additional 3 Senior/District Officers and a Compliance Officer would be required to achieve full compliance with the Food Standards Agency's requirements on a sustainable basis.



Food Hygiene Intervention Programme for 2018

The table below outlines the visits identified for 2018. The table also includes those inspections not completed in the previous years inspection programme.

Category A premises are the highest risk premises and are subject to an intervention every 6 months, B's yearly, C's every 18 months and D's every two years. AES (Alternative Enforcement Strategy) premises are subject to an Alternative Enforcement Strategy every 3 years.

The AES provides a means of dealing with those premises deemed to be so low risk with respect to food hygiene issues that they can be dealt with other than by intervention from officers. Tailored questionnaires are used to assess premises suitability in being placed in the AES. From the information provided by the business in the questionnaire officers will then assess the suitability of placing a business outside the routine inspection programme.

Risk Rating	Number of Premises Due in 2018	Number of Premises Overdue (2017)	Visit frequency
A	7	0	6 months
B	22	0	1 year
C	118	0	18 months
D	248	324	2 years
AES (E)	81	76	3 years
Unrated	145	N/A	Determine by next inspection
Total	621	400	

Contractors will be used to address the large number of overdue interventions at Risk Rating Category D.

Food Standards Intervention Programme 2018

The table below outlines the visits identified for 2018. The table includes those inspections not completed in the previous years inspection programme.

Category A premises are the highest risk premises and are subject to an intervention every 12 months and Category B's premises every 18 months. The FSA Food Law Code of Practice deems that Category C rated premises do not receive an intervention as they are so low risk they do not justify one. These should be subject to minimum contact via

the AES at least once every 5 years in accordance with the FSA Food Code of Practice.

The information in relation to both the Food Standards and the Food Hygiene intervention programme forms part of the data submitted to the FSA on an annual basis. This annual return, known as LAEM's (Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring) has been operated since 2009. The submission of data is required by all countries within the EU. The figures are derived from information inputted between 1 April the previous year and 31 March in the current year.

Risk Rating	Number of Premises Due in 2018	Number of Premises Overdue (2017)	Visit frequency
A	4	1	Yearly
B	86	165	2 years
C/AES *	6	270	5 years
Unrated	422	n/a	Determined by next inspection
Total	518	436	

Feeding Stuffs

Wolverhampton has 45 premises where feed is produced, stored or handled. Priority inspection has been contracted to Staffordshire Trading Standards, whom target higher risk premises and those generating complaints, on average premises receive a 3 year inspection.

Priority Areas for Intervention and Targeted Activities

Identified enforcement priorities for further development for 2018 are set out below:

- To carry out 100% of all food hygiene inspections at A-D rated premises including D rated premises which are overdue.
- To carry out full food hygiene and food standards interventions of approved premises and other manufacturers that fall due within the year.
- To develop Primary Authority Partnerships with businesses in the area.
- Introduce charges for re-rating food business.
- Develop a consultancy service introducing charges for advice and guidance.
- To provide suitable, relevant and informative guidance to businesses to assist their compliance with food labelling legislation, including allergen legislation.
- To ensure a satisfactory level of compliance with food standards issues in manufacturers and processors.
- To implement new legislation, Codes of Practice and service policy and procedures as required by law and when requiring update.
- Provide advice on, and enforcement of, The General Food Law Regulation (EC) 178:2002, The Food Safety Act, the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and Regulation EU 852, 853/2004 and 178/2002.
- Should resources allow we will undertake an alternative enforcement programme for premises classed as lower risk for food hygiene and food standards inspections.

Food Complaints

The Service endeavours to adopt a consistent approach to the receipt and investigation of food complaints, approximately 61 of which are received each year. In general, all food complaints made to the service will give rise to a detailed consideration of the exact circumstances of each case in order to determine whether it would be an appropriate use of resources to pursue the matter. A range of options is available:

- Advise complainant to pursue directly with retailer or manufacturer.
- Accept complaint and refer to either 'Home', 'Originating' Authority and/or Primary Authorities for information and/or investigation.
- Accept and investigate complaint in liaison with 'Home' 'Originating and/or 'Primary' Authorities with a view to further action.

All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Food Complaints Policy and Procedure, and where appropriate, complainants will be directed to the Service's 'Common Food Complaints' booklet.

All complainants are advised at the earliest opportunity of the course of action the Council intends to take. The vast majority of complaints fall into the second of the above categories. The

Service will accept and investigate complaints if one or more of the following circumstances are apparent:

- There is 'prima facie' evidence of an offence under the Food Safety Act 1990 or its subordinate Regulations and the nature of the offence gives rise to public health or safety concerns.
- The complaint represents a repeat of previous offences by the company/trader concerned and the circumstances of the case indicate the case would withstand legal scrutiny.

Wolverhampton Council is guided by LGR 'Guidance on Food Complaints' in its investigations. These are investigated by sampling and analysis if necessary. In addition to food complaints received each year, in the region of 457 complaints relating to conditions in or around food premises are also received. These complaints range from allegations of poor hygiene to major defects with drainage systems or rodent infestations etc. The vast majority of these complaints are investigated by a visit from an officer.

The maximum response time for complaints is 10 working days; however, these are driven by levels of associated risk and prioritised as such.

Home Authority and Primary Authority Principle

Businesses operating in the United Kingdom (UK) need to comply with a wide range of legislation. Local authorities, which are responsible for enforcing most legislation, help businesses to comply by providing advice, guidance and information. Businesses usually build up a relationship with, and receive advice and information from, one local authority that is usually based where the business is.

For trading standards and food safety matters, the local government has developed a scheme where that authority, known as the Home Authority, is the local authority at the location of the business's decision-making base. The Home Authority Principle is a scheme to help businesses by providing contact points for advice and guidance in order to maintain high standards of Business Services, encourage fair trade and develop a consistent approach to enforcement.

As part of the government's "Better Regulation" agenda, the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 has paved the way for an extension of the Home Authority scheme. The new scheme is known as "Primary Authority". Effectively, Primary Authority gives statutory backing to the Home Authority scheme and provides a series of additional benefits. It is currently

administered by the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO).

The Council is committed to supporting the Home and Primary Authority scheme in respect of both proactive and reactive food safety issues. Although the authority is home authority for a number of businesses we currently do not have Primary Authority responsibility for any businesses within Wolverhampton.

In maintaining our home authority partnerships, officers from the Service will:-

- respond to enquiries from other local authorities about, or concerning, the business or its operations or procedures
- act on behalf of other local authorities as the primary regulatory link to the business
- provide advice to the companies on the interpretation of legislation
- provide assistance to enforcing authorities in the conduct of investigations and encourage the businesses to offer reasonable assistance.

The authority will have regard to the Primary Authority Partnership Scheme and associated official guidance when considering formal legal action.

Advice to Businesses

In order to compliment and enhance its enforcement functions the Service provides advice and information to businesses with the aim of assisting them to comply with their statutory obligations. Advice is available to those premises starting-up business and to those already trading. Advice includes compliance with legislation and nationally approved guidance.

Advice and information is provided both reactively and proactively on a planned basis in the form of advisory components of all interventions / visits and information provided by the council's website.

Apart from the 'feedstuff' related premises, advice to business with implications in relation to feeding stuffs is minimal, because retailers are selling sealed containers of long shelf life products.

Sampling

The Services carries out food sampling on both a reactive and proactive basis.

Reactive sampling, for either microbiological examination or compositional analysis takes the following forms:

- Sampling of foods subject to complaint
- Unplanned sampling carried out during an inspection
- Un-programmed sampling associated with a food poisoning investigation
- Programmed sampling as determined by the sampling programme

Two sampling programmes are operated, one for microbiological examination and one for compositional analysis. These concentrate on businesses that will positively benefit from the taking of samples and the results and advice officers can offer to the business operator.

Microbiological Sampling Programme

The microbiological sampling programme focuses on assisting food businesses to provide safe food to their customers.

Each sample is subject to 6 standard determinations:

- Aerobic Colony Count (ACC)
- Enterobacteriaceae
- E.coli
- Salmonella
- Staphlococcus aureas
- Listeria

Each sample result is interpreted in accordance with the most recently published guidelines from the Health Protection Agency (HPA) issue Nov 2009.

The microbiological sampling programme incorporates both national surveys and those organised at a local level through the West Midlands Food Liaison Group.

Compositional Sampling Programme

The compositional sampling programme consists of samples being subject to

- Presence /absence of certain constituents
- Whether food has been subject to certain processes
- Compliance with labelling requirements
- Composition of food, e.g. alcohol substitution, % lean meat, over-use of food colourings

The compositional programme incorporates both national and local surveys. The service will participate in such surveys subject to available resources.

Sampling and surveys are based on the Home Authority Principle and target manufacturing businesses, new and existing. Premises having unsatisfactory results will be subject to follow-up formal sampling.

Water Sampling

There is only one commercial private water supply in Wolverhampton. In order to ensure compliance with the relevant regulations the Service ensures that samples of water from all private water supplies are taken and results analysed.

Feeding Stuffs Sampling

The authority has entered into a partnership with Staffordshire County Council, who have now assumed responsibility for undertaking enforcement compliance within this area.



Infectious Disease Control

In conjunction with Public Health England (PHE), Wolverhampton Council investigates cases of actual or suspected food poisoning and food borne infectious disease. The response is determined by:

- The nature of the (suspected) illness
- The number of cases
- The nature of the employment of affected individuals
- The previous record of implicated food businesses

Approximately 168 individual cases are notified to the service every year, a number of these may constitute outbreaks, where a number of cases are associated with the source of the food poisoning.

In all cases implicating known food hazards the standards contained in the document 'Food Handlers - Fitness to Work' are observed.

Under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 and associated regulations, duly authorised officers are provided with wider, more flexible powers to deal with food related incidents or emergencies where infection or contamination presents, or could present a risk to human health. It also places a duty on GP's to notify the proper officer of the Council of food poisoning cases.

Food Safety Incidents

All formal food alert warnings are investigated in line with the local interpretation of the recommended approach attached to each warning. The authority receives notification of each warning through the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

Liaison Arrangements

Wolverhampton Council is committed to open, transparent and proportionate enforcement which is consistent with Government advice, guidance and national and regional interpretation of legislative requirements.

In addressing this the importance of collaboration and consultation locally and nationally is recognised. Regionally there are liaison groups at Chief Officer (Head of Service) level in respect of Environmental Health and Trading Standards Services.

The Service will also respond to consultation exercises from the Government, the Local Government Association and relevant professional bodies.

Officers from the Service also meet and liaise with the following organisations:

- The West Midlands Food Liaison Group
- Central England Trading Standards Authorities Group (CEntSA) - Quality Standards Sub Group
- The Health Protection Agency
- Public Health
- Wolverhampton NHS Trusts Liaison Group
- Wolverhampton Business Solutions Centre
- The Government Agency Intelligence Network
- The West Midlands Regulatory Services Partnership

With respect to liaison arrangements with trade representatives the service can organise periodic food focus groups or forums and attend and support local trade groups when required.

Recently, Wolverhampton became actively involved with the partnership between regulators, representatives from trade and industry, the Chamber of Commerce and the Black Country Consortium. The aim of the partnership is to improve local regulatory delivery to meet business needs. This partnership has produced the Black Country Regulators Operating Framework which implements the requirements of the Regulators Code, referred to in section 2.6 above.

6

Resources

Financial Allocation

As with all areas of service the allocation of resources is undertaken in accordance with the agreed Medium Term Financial Strategy for the Council.

Food enforcement work benefits from the overall senior management resource provided through the Place Directorate.

This area of activity also benefits from central support services recharged through internal service level agreements.

The overall budgetary provision for the service is £1.9 million. A wide range of other non-food related services are delivered within this budgetary provision. Provision for food hygiene and standards is currently £400,000 but as previously stated is subject to on-going review.

The services resourced through this budgetary provision are not confined to food related matters and include:

- Food Hygiene
- Infectious Disease investigation and control
- Food Standards
- Sampling
- Health and Safety
- Public Health (relating to commercial businesses, i.e. nuisance, noise, damage, etc)
- Central Support Services
- Licensing Enforcement
- City Centre compliance and regulation
- Street Scene Compliance
- Student Training

As feeding stuffs enforcement activity is carried out as part of comprehensive Trading Standards duties it is not possible to accurately cost, but it will amount to less than 0.5% of the total budget for Trading Standards.

Staffing Allocation

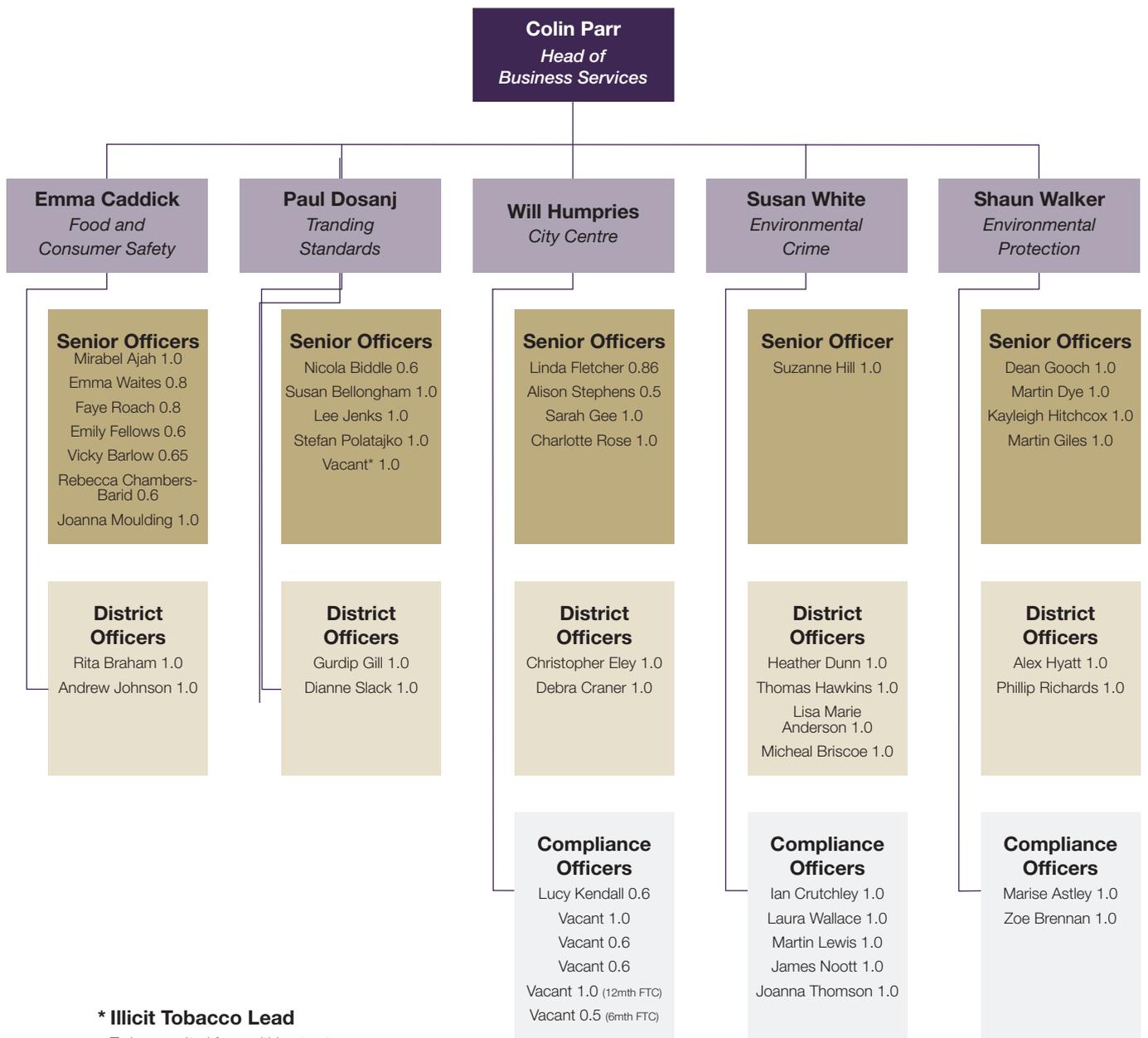
The strategic financial, human and service functions are undertaken through the Business Services Services Management Team.

A detailed analysis of the proportion of the supervisory and operational time dedicated to food safety is contained in the following table, and the structure of Business Services (Commercial) shown below.

Post	% Food Safety	FTE
Head of Service (x1)	5%	0.05
Section Leader North (x0.8)	75%	0.6
Section Leader South (x1)	10%	0.1
District/Senior EHO (8.45)	80%	6.76
Total Full Time Equivalent (FTE)		7.51

- This officer undertakes the authorities 'Food Lead' role.

The current structural chart for the service is shown below:



Competency

The service operates a strict regime of supervision and assessment prior to the delegation of responsibility to officers, which is in accordance with the relevant FSA Food Law Code of Practice.

Service Lead and Senior Officer posts, would normally be individuals with full delegated powers under the various statutes within the service's sphere of responsibility.

The Food Law Code of Practice requires that authorised officers demonstrate that they are competent to carry out their functions prior to being authorised. Officers are therefore required to complete a competency assessment with the Food Service Lead within 3 months of commencing their role. This assessment should be reviewed at least annually.

Officers with less than six months post qualification experience are subject to regular checking, monitoring and accompanied visits in accordance with the FSA Food Law Code of Practice and partake in regular intervention reflections with other officers.

All officers are subject to one formal monitoring visit per year.

Staff Development

As part of the Council's aim to provide services efficiently and effectively, an annual appraisal will take place with officers. As part of the appraisal process officers development needs will be examined to ensure they are trained to a level of competence appropriate to their work. The Food Law Code of Practice requires all officers involved in undertaking official controls to obtain a minimum of 20 hours CPD per year. 10 of which must be on core food matters directly related to the delivery of official controls. There are different ways officers will obtain this training. These include:

- Internal and external training courses/events
- Cascade training delivered by officers who themselves have attended training
- Individual interviews
- Divisional meetings and briefings – used to disseminate information etc
- Attendance at ad hoc working groups
- "On the Job" training – as part of the delegation process

- Self-training – suitable journals and up to date information are provided
- Establishment of trainee/student placements
- Placement with other services or teams for training purposes and special projects

The service will ensure staff participate in any regional food standardisation exercise and in any organised in-house. There will also be opportunities for members of the division to attend one-off seminars on topical issues arising during the year. Staff attending these seminars are required to present a feedback session at the next available service meeting where it is deemed appropriate.



7

Quality Assessment

Various monitoring techniques are used in order to assess officer performance against set criteria, including the FSA 'Standard', and all other external standards established by various Codes of Practice and BIS/BRDO guidance etc. For example:

- Internal audit
- Accompanied visits
- West Midlands Food Liaison Group
- Inspection monitoring
- Correspondence checking/file review
- Standardisation exercises
- Quarterly review of the Work Programme
- FSA audit

An annual review of requirements set out in the 'Standard' shall also form part of the Service Work Programme.



8

Performance Management and Review

All areas of Council Service are subject to service planning and performance measurement and review. This is managed through work programmes, service plans, corporate strategies and financial planning, etc.

Performance against performance indicators is subject to regular reviews reported to the Service Director for City Environment. Similarly, there is on-going monitoring of the deployment of financial resources against budgetary provision, again reviewed on a monthly basis.

The monitoring of performance against Service Plans has been discussed earlier in this document; it involves Service Directors, Head of Service, Service Lead Officers and employee groups.

In addition, there is external review of performance through the Audit Commission, External Audit and statutory returns such as those to the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

Any areas for improvement identified as requiring action will be detailed as part of the review process. These will be addressed by the Business Services Management Team as part of the review process and action taken shall range from immediate action to inclusion in the Service Plan for future years.

9

Regulatory and Investigatory Powers Act

The service has fully implemented the requirements for the authorisation of officers and surveillance in the required circumstances.

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