

Subject: Food Safety Service Plan 2016/2017

Report to: EMT – 26th May 2016
Environment Committee – 8th June 2016

Report by: Sarah Flatman - Commercial Team Manager

SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS

To seek Member approval for the formal adoption of the Food Service Plan for 2016/2017 – as detailed at Annex A – and to provide details of the work undertaken by the Food Safety Team during the previous year.

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.2 The Commercial Team within Environmental Services is responsible for delivering the food safety service along with other environmental health functions.
- 1.3 Food Authorities (local authorities enforcing the Food Safety Act 1990) are required to prepare and annually review a Food Safety Plan for their area under the Food Standards Agency Framework Directive.
- 1.4 This Service Plan explores the purpose of our food safety service and states our commitment to improving food standards within businesses in the Borough.
- 1.5 This Service Plan forms the basis on which local authorities will be monitored and audited by the FSA to ensure consistency and effectiveness. It also allows local authorities to plan and resource their food safety enforcement work.
- 1.6 The Service Plan also outlines the service plan outcomes for 2015/16 and the planned interventions for this year that the team are working towards.

2. FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

- 2.1 Attached as Appendix 1 to this report is The Food Safety Service Plan for 2016/2017.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no implications for the financial resources of the Council as they are currently met from existing budgets.

4. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 If the Food Service Plan is not prepared or the Commercial Team does not undertake the required work then the authority may be perceived as not meeting its statutory obligations and this may result in intervention by the Food Standards Agency.

5. **CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 The Food Service Plan provides a current picture of the food safety service. It highlights the main areas of work during the previous year and comments on the work proposed for this year.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 It is recommended that Members:
- (a) support the aims and objectives of the Service Plan;
 - (b) adopt the Food Service Plan for 2016/17.

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NONE

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	No
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	No
Existing Council Policies:	No
Financial Implications:	No
Legal Implications (including human rights):	No
Risk Implications:	No
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	No
Crime & Disorder:	No
Every Child Matters:	No

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

COMMERCIAL TEAM



FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2016–2017

1. INTRODUCTION

The Food Safety Service plan is required under the Framework Agreement by the Food Standards Agency.

This annual plan is produced by the Commercial Team within Environmental Services to demonstrate the demand that is placed on the food safety service. It also describes the service that is provided to both food businesses and members of the public within the Borough.

Under EC and UK Food safety regulations, the Council has a duty to register all food businesses operating within the Borough and to periodically inspect these premises in order to ensure that they are operating within the control of the legislative requirements and that they are producing safe food.

1.1 Purpose of the Food Safety Service

The overriding purpose for the food safety service is defined as:-

To ensure food is safe for public consumption

This is to be achieved by:-

- Assessing food businesses using a variety of tools to check if they are doing anything that will potentially make the food they are preparing or handling unsafe (an unsafe business).
- Communicating to the businesses any practices or defects that could potentially make food unsafe.
- Identifying the best tools to use to help that business make long term changes, to ensure that those unsafes are addressed or removed.
- Working with the business until we are satisfied they are safe.

1.2 How are we achieving purpose?

Officers will visit a food business and carry out an assessment of the business to identify if they are doing anything that could potentially impact on the safety of the food and the level of compliance with food hygiene requirements. The officer then determines if the business is 'Unsafe' by identifying any unsafe practices and procedures and discussing the risk with the business. All unsafes and breaches of food legislation are communicated to the business at the time. For unsafe businesses, the officer will then enter into a period of working with the business to 'make it safe'.

During the make safe process, officers have a variety of tools and they are free to choose the most appropriate to use, based on the unsafes identified and the business itself. Practical demonstrations and interaction are used with great effect. Our make

safe tools are expanding as the team find new and successful ways of assisting businesses to raise standards.

The officer must take into account the business attitude and how willing they are to work with them to rectify unsafes. If the business fails to make changes with officer support, there are a variety of enforcement tools available to us; these are included in the make safe tools. Enforcement work is carried out in line with the Food Law Code of Practice.

Between April 2015 and March 2016 the team served:-

- 10 hygiene improvement notices
- 1 detention of food notice

A food business was successfully prosecuted for food and health and safety offences. The Council are also in the process of taking legal action against a food business for significant food hygiene contraventions and three premises voluntarily closed due to poor hygiene conditions.

1.3 Risk Rating & Hygiene Rating

Following a food assessment and make safe process (where required), every business is awarded a risk rating based on the level of risk associated with the business's activities, level of compliance, attitude of the food business and confidence that the assessing officer has in the business's ability to maintain acceptable food safety standards. The risk rating is used to determine the frequency of future visits.

The Food Hygiene Rating is awarded using some of these criteria and is awarded to a business as a tool to communicate the food safety standards to consumers and as a tool to motivate businesses to improve or maintain standards. The hygiene rating will be explained in further detail in section 5.3.

1.4 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

The Council has 'The Plan' which sets out the Council's vision and priorities for 2015-2020. Within the plan the Council has identified six priorities that require further attention and investment. These are:-

- Economic Growth
- Housing
- Neighbourhoods, Communities and the Environment
- Tourism, Culture and Heritage
- Great Yarmouth's Town Centre

The Food Safety Service Plan is linked to all the corporate objectives that are shown in 'The Plan' via the Environmental Services Service Plan 2016/17.

The Food Safety Service Plan links to the priorities in the Council Plan and is particularly relevant to supporting businesses and encouraging sustainable economic development, and improving the town centre by working with businesses to improve standards.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of the Borough

The Borough of Great Yarmouth has a population of approximately 97,800 residents and is growing, with a prediction to reach 105,400 by 2021. Great Yarmouth has been a seaside resort since the late 18th century. Today the Borough is one of the most popular British seaside resorts and has over 70,000 available bed spaces, caters for around 4 million day visits and nearly 5 million visitor nights each year. In the summer months the population effectively doubles which places a seasonal demand on the Food Safety Service. There is heavy dependency on the tourist industry and 78 per cent of the jobs in the borough are service-based.

The ethnic minority population is small and currently makes up approximately 3.1% of the population in the Borough. The majority of migrants in Great Yarmouth come from Portugal, Poland and Republic of Lithuania. Greater than expected numbers of people where the first language is not English place greater demands on the service.

2.2 Profile of Businesses within the Borough

The food safety work of the team is delivered through proactive and reactive visits and interventions reaching every one of our approximately 1100 registered food businesses. There are a variety of food businesses registered in the Borough, although the majority of these are small scale caterers and retailers. We have very few food manufacturers.

Great Yarmouth has a very high turnover of food business operators within the small catering and retail establishments in the Borough, a result of the nature and seasonality of the town. This means that the food team see new businesses constantly opening that require registering and assessing throughout the year.

2.3 Organisational Structure

Great Yarmouth Borough Council has an Executive Management Team consisting of a Chief Executive, 2 Directors, a Transformation Manager and 12 Group Managers. The Food Safety Service sits within the Commercial Team of Environmental Services. This team is led by the Commercial Team Manager who reports to the Group Manager - Environmental Services.

For the Organisational Structure of the Commercial Team see **Appendix 1**.

Great Yarmouth Borough Council is a District Council and therefore provides the Food Safety Service whilst Norfolk County Council Trading Standards is responsible for Food Standards and Feed Stuffs Control.

2.4 Accessing the Service

The Commercial Team of Environmental Services is based at the Great Yarmouth Town Hall Offices on Hall Quay in Great Yarmouth and can be contacted in a number of ways:-

- A reception facility is operated between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday;
- The Environmental Health Service has a dedicated telephone contact number on 01493 846478 which provides a link to the Commercial Team;
- By email at health@great-yarmouth.gov.uk;
- By fax on 01493 846415;
- The Environmental Health Service also has an out of hours answer phone that directs callers to the Council's 24 hour Central Control number in the event of emergencies.

Depending on the nature of the call an appropriate Officer may be called or the matter may be referred to an Officer the next working day.

The Council has a website that provides access to further information and advice and this can be accessed at www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk.

There are a number of languages other than English identified as in use within the Borough. The majority of proprietors are, however, able to communicate in English or have somebody present at the premises that can translate. In many cases where there may be language difficulties the service has the use of Language Line (Intran), a telephone and translation service to which the Council subscribes and the use of Intran (Cintra) when a face to face interpreter is required. Correspondence can be sent where necessary in languages other than English.

2.5 Scope of the Service

The Council has responsibility to enforce and provide advice in all aspects of food hygiene and food standards legislation, all of which is delivered by the Commercial Team.

Work of the team may be split into two broad areas of work – proactive and reactive.

Proactive includes:-

- Programmed Inspections and revisits to food premises;
- Advising businesses of food law;
- Sampling of food from food businesses;
- Enforcement of food safety law;
- Provision of food hygiene training and advice to support our food businesses on food safety matters;

- Promotion and operation of the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme;
- Approval and inspection of food businesses producing food of animal origin;
- Imported food control as an inland authority for food imported from outside the EU through sampling, inspection and enforcement;
- Promotional and educational activities and initiatives based around food safety and food hygiene.

Reactive includes:-

- Investigating and controlling outbreaks of food poisoning/Infectious Diseases;
- Responding to food alerts;
- Investigating complaints about food and food businesses;
- Dealing with unfit food;
- Provision of food export certificates for businesses intending to export foods;
- Carrying out ship sanitation certificate controls.

In addition, if during an intervention visit to a food premises health and safety matters of evident concern creating a risk of serious personal injury or ill health are observed or brought to attention, actions will be taken in accordance with national guidance to deal with the issue(s). For example, this could include unguarded equipment, seriously defective gas or electrical appliances etc.

All officers within the food team also pick up other areas of work at varying levels. In addition there are further demands coming into the service in the following areas:-

- Corporate Health and Safety
- Health and Safety
- Licensing
- Commercial Nuisance
- Seafront Management

A Civica APP database is used to maintain the register of food premises and determine intervals of interventions and visits to food premises based on the risk rating of the premises, and manage the FSA Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. Data is recorded of all food safety, health and safety and licensing activities and actions. This database is shared with Norfolk County Council Trading Standards Department.

2.6 Demands on the Service

Food premises are subject to interventions at intervals determined by risk rating in accordance with the inspection rating system within the FSA Food Law Code of Practice. This system rates food premises according to the type of food sold, the nature of the trading and the overall food safety standards of the business. The frequency of inspection or intervention is dependent on the rating score obtained for each premises.

There are currently a total of approximately 1100 food premises within the Great Yarmouth District. This can vary day to day as businesses open and close.

The majority of catering establishments are made up of schools, residential care homes, hotels and guesthouses, holiday parks, restaurants, takeaways and pubs and clubs. Retail establishments include supermarkets, hypermarkets and smaller retailers.

Great Yarmouth is predominantly a tourist area and as such has a large number of hotels, holiday parks, caravan sites and other tourist attractions that are mainly open between Easter and October.

Currently as of the 1st April 2016 we have the following premises profile by risk rating as follows:-

Premises Rating Category	Inspection Frequency	Number
A	At least every 6 months	31
B	At least every 12 months	34
C	At least every 18 months	234
D	At least every 24 months	427
E	Every 3 years or programme of alternative enforcement	342
Unrated premises	n/a	17
Total		1085

We currently also have 2 establishments that are currently approved for handling products of animal origin

2.7 Enforcement Policy

The Environmental Services Group have a generic enforcement policy which was reviewed in January 2016. This policy details how the Department will use its powers in relation to enforcement. In particular this policy is designed to help promote efficient, effective and consistent approaches to regulatory inspection.

This Policy has been written in conjunction with the Regulators Compliance Code 2014, The Human Rights Act 1998, The European Convention on Human Rights, The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

All officers within the Commercial Team are expected to act in accordance with this policy.

3. SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Inspection of Food Businesses

The Council is committed to carrying out inspections at a frequency that where capability

allows is not less than that determined by the Food Safety Act Code of Practice.

Following our systems thinking review some years ago the team do, however, score differently to the parameters laid down in the Food Law Code of Practice. As part of our systems thinking approach and in accordance with continuous improvement, the team are in the process of re-evaluating our current method of scoring premises.

Staff resources within the team are directed towards the inspection of the highest risk food premises, in particular those in categories A and B, approved premises, non-compliant category C premises and premises scoring zero in respect of the Food Standards Agency Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

All new food businesses are prioritised and our aim is to ensure all are inspected within 28 days. This can be difficult at times due to the considerable turnover of businesses.

Food inspections within food premises where appropriate will also include checks in respect of imported foods.

An alternative intervention programme is used as appropriate for our Category E rated premises where we alternate between postal/telephone questionnaires and an inspection at the premises. Interventions, however, would be carried out at these premises where the service receives a complaint, change of owner or for any other occasion that may be justified by an officer.

3.1.1 Inspections Completed 2015/2016

The team carried out 679 routine or initial food safety inspections from the period 1 April 2016 to the 31 March 2017. This is a significant increase on last year when the team completed 441 inspections. This increase in inspections was due to additional resource being available in the team through the use of two part-time contractors.

As of the 31 March 2016, 19 premises were overdue their inspection in the following rating categories:-

A - 0

B - 1

C - 6

D - 6

E - 6

This is a significant decrease on last year when 208 premises were overdue their visit. A project was also carried out with one of our contractors to ensure premises that were indicating that they were unrated on our database were prioritised for an inspection. It was found that a significant number of these were no longer trading.

Last year it was highlighted that the Civica APP database the team use to record the work of the Commercial Team, which is shared with Norfolk Trading Standards,

contained significant inaccuracies in respect of our data held about the food premises in the Borough. During data checks officers are continuing to find a number of inaccuracies around businesses that have ceased trading. It was also found that a significant number of premises had wrongly been assigned a food code which meant the data regarding the number of our food premises was not correct. The Commercial Manager has spent a significant amount of time to improve the accuracy of the database.

3.1.2 Inspections Due 2016/2017

The work the team carry out for this year is dependent on current staffing resources. However, for the period 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017 the following number of premises are due an intervention as of 1 April 2016.

This does not take into account new businesses that may be opening which, as part our approach, are a priority for us to inspect.

Premises Rating Category	Inspection Frequency	Number
A	At least every 6 months	31
B	At least every 12 months	31
C	At least every 18 months	153
D	At least every 24 months	188
E	Every 3 years or programme of alternative enforcement	68
Unrated premises	n/a	17
Total		471

It should be noted that currently we have more A and B rated food premises than other local authorities as the team adopted a different scoring system which means that, for example, a premise will become an A if it scores 72 or more, while under the Food Law Code of Practice the score is 91 or more. This original scoring was developed during our systems thinking review and was implemented in 2013. Following discussions with the Food Standard Agency this scoring criteria is currently under review.

Our target for this year is to carry out an intervention at 100% of the A-D rated premises. The team will apply an alternative enforcement strategy as appropriate for E rated premises. This target will continuously be reviewed throughout the year.

3.2 New Businesses

New food businesses are a priority to the food safety team; officers either becoming aware of them through registration, licensing and planning applications or when on the district.

The number of new food businesses being inspected this in 2016/2016 has decreased to 9.5% of the total .

Our aim is to visit all new food businesses prior to opening or within 28 days, in order to assist them to ensure that they are operating in compliance with UK legislation and safe procedures. We are also able to provide assistance through signposting to other organisations and Council departments, as we have a presence and contact with these businesses.

The team are in the process of shortly launching a start-up pack for new businesses that will support them in meeting their legal requirements, in not only food safety but also covering all aspects of starting up a new business.

Over 86% of our new food businesses are safe at the time of their first assessment. This is an increase from the previous year of 6% which is indicating that the advice work that officers provide for new businesses is helping to ensure that new businesses are safe when they begin operating.

The service will continue to look at ways of strengthening communication links with other Council services to help us identify new food businesses and to help the Authority maintain up to date and accurate business information.

The team are also using social media sites such as Just Eat, Facebook and Trip Advisor to identify new food businesses opening in the Borough. Within the team, a Seafront Officer provides up to date information about businesses opening within our main tourist areas.

3.3 Advice for Food Business Operators

Officers are committed to building positive working relationships with food business proprietors and work with them to help them comply with the law and to improve food safety standards.

This is achieved by:-

- Providing advice and guidance during inspections and as part of follow up documentation;
- Proactively commenting on food safety in relation to planning applications;
- Contacting new businesses to provide advice;
- Responding to enquiries from food businesses operators for advice;
- Signposting people to information available on the Council's website pages;
- Delivering training courses and seminars;
- Responding to businesses requesting guidance either by telephone or e-mail.

The Commercial Team Manager is also attending the Better Business for All New Anglia Steering Group to look at ways of developing this partnership which is designed to improve the way regulation is delivered to ease the burden on the local business community. This is being developed with the regulatory services of all councils in Norfolk and Suffolk, the New Anglia LEP and the New Anglia Growth Hub.

3.4 Food Safety Complaints

Food Safety service requests received by the team usually relate to complaints about the condition of food, food premises and/ or the practices of food handlers.

All consumer complaints are taken as indicators of management problems within a food business and would prompt a food safety assessment. This includes general complaints relating to cleanliness or waste disposal, as well as allegations of food poisoning. If the business has only recently been assessed and is not due a routine assessment, officers' judgement is utilised to determine the most appropriate action to investigate the complaint.

The team in 2015/2016 dealt with 88 food complaints. 40% of businesses that are assessed following receipt of a complaint are found by officers to be unsafe, indicating that the many complaints are either justified or indicators of poor food safety within a business.

There were also 362 other service requests received relating to issues such as requests for information, health and safety complaints, noise complaints, licensing and general Environmental Health advice that were handled by the Commercial Team.

3.5 Food Sampling

As well as using sampling as an important make safe tool, sampling is used to assist with a number of key food safety projects.

The Council participates in the Norfolk Food Liaison Group, Eastern Region Food Sampling Liaison Group and national co-ordinated sampling programmes.

Reactive sampling may also be undertaken in relation to complaints received and conditions found during inspections and visits and following referrals from other Local Authorities, and in relation to suspected food poisoning cases and outbreaks.

Sampling is important to protect public health and safety through the examination of foods and/ or food equipment. We understand the importance of this type of research to identify potentially unsafe foods and food production methods.

59 samples were taken from food businesses last year. Most of the results from these samples were found to be satisfactory and no further follow up action was required. However, some of the samples were found to be unsatisfactory and follow up work with businesses was required to secure compliance.

Food, water and environment sample examinations are dealt with by Public Health England at Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Network, 61 Colindale Avenue, London, NW9 5EQ.

3.6 Imported Food Controls

The authority has responsibility for imported food control as an inland authority and imported food control forms part of the overall food safety intervention process. Although there are currently no border inspection posts or enhanced remote sheds within the county boundaries, officers will routinely look for foods imported during visits to premises and carry out imported food control sampling and examination to check traceability and compliance with compositional, microbiological and labelling compliance standards.

During 2016 all officers within the team completed in-house imported food training.

3.7 Training for Food Handlers

The team has a programme to deliver the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering together with an in-house food safety refresher course. Officers also carry out tailored training sessions to businesses. During 2015/2016 the following training courses were delivered:-

Level 2 Food Safety in Catering	Level 2 in Food Safety in Catering Refresher Course	General Training to Businesses on Food Safety	Low Cost Training Event
4	7	5	1

3.8 Other Demands on the Food Service

In addition to working with our food businesses to ensure they are safe, we have a number of other demands on the service:-

3.8.1 Port Health

Great Yarmouth is an authorised port for the issuance of ship sanitation certificates. During 2015/2016 the team responded to 87 requests for ship sanitation inspections.

3.8.2 Control and investigation of Outbreaks and Infectious Diseases

All formal and informal notifications are recorded on an infectious disease database. We respond to all notifications of infectious diseases, either by the provision of advice to those suffering the illness or to investigate potential sources of infectious disease.

The majority of notifications received are sporadic cases of infection, some associated with travel abroad. We were notified of 61 cases of infectious disease last year. 42 of these were Campylobacter where a letter and an information sheet was sent. The 19 other reported cases of infectious disease included Salmonella, Cryptosporidium and Giardiasis and were all investigated.

3.8.3 Food Safety Incidents

The Council reacts to Food Alerts and Food Safety Incidents in compliance with the requirements of the FSA Code of Practice and guidance.

All notifications received are reviewed and pursued depending upon category allocation and a register of actions taken is maintained. County-wide liaison through the Norfolk Food Liaison Group ensures a consistency of approach and establishes whether the District Council or County Council Trading Standards Department take the lead.

This ensures businesses and the general public are advised quickly of any potential hazards to food supplies and receive guidance on any actions required of them.

3.8.4 Liaison with Other Organisations

The Food and Safety Team has liaison in place with a wide range of other organisations. For food safety matters these include:-

- Food Standards Agency
- Norfolk Food Liaison Group
- Health Protection Agency Advisory Group
- Local Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC) and Public Health England

There is also regular liaison and consultation with our Council internal service providers on issues such as:-

- Applications for planning approval;
- Great Yarmouth Event Safety Advisory Group Consultations (GYSAG) on food safety matters;
- Licensing Service on licensing issues;
- Business rates.

4. RESOURCES

4.1 Financial Allocation

The total budget allocated to the Commercial Team that covers Food, Health and Safety and Licensing for 2016/2017 is approximately £250,574. The proportion allocated specifically for food safety is approximately £144,000 or 60% of the total.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

The Commercial Team has the following number of staff currently working on food safety enforcement:-

Food and Safety Team	FTE 5 of time devoted to food safety
3 Environmental Health Officer(EHO)	1.9
1 Commercial Team Manager	0.5
3 Technical Officers	2.4
1 Part time EHO position	0.4
Total	5.2

4.3 Staff Development Plan

All officers of the Foods Safety Team have been assessed against the Food Law Code of Practice relevant competencies by the Commercial Manager to ensure that they hold the appropriate qualifications, have sufficient experience of food law enforcement and are properly trained and competent.

Bi-annual formal reviews of training and development needs for individual staff are carried out as part of the Council's appraisal process. In addition staff receive regular one-to-ones with the Commercial Team Manager to regularly review their training and competency needs.

Records of qualifications, training and experience are documented and link directly to the officer's authorisation procedure.

To improve consistency all officers are expected to carry out joint visits with all other officers within the team. Records of these visits are recorded.

5. MEASURING PERFORMANCE OF THE SERVICE

We collect a variety of data to help us measure the performance of the service in a number of key areas, meeting purpose, risk rating changes and continuous improvement.

5.1 Are we achieving purpose?

This year 675 businesses were assessed.

80% of food businesses were found to be safe at the point of initial assessment; in contrast 20% were deemed unsafe. This improved 3% since last year.

5.2 Risk Rating Changes

Currently our best indicator of how well our work within the businesses is achieving our purpose is examined through a change in the risk rating awarded to the business at subsequent assessments.

The following table shows the movement of premises between risk bands from the start

of April 2015 to the end of March 2016:

Risk Band	Total Premises inspected	Risk band at Start						
		A	B	C	D	E	Outside	Unrated
A	29	10	5	10	4	0	0	0
B	30	8	14	5	3	0	0	0
C	174	18	22	86	39	5	0	4
D	242	10	11	40	154	20	0	7
E	200	1	3	3	23	167	0	3
Totals	675	47	55	144	223	192	0	14

Reading across the table shows the number of premises that were in each risk band at the start of the period in question and reading down the columns shows the number in each band at the start, and the band they are now

In respect of the premises inspected in 2015/2016 it is clear from this table that premises have shown a downward movement in risk rating, signifying that the overall risk associated with the business has reduced. There has been a significant decrease in the number of our A and B rated premises.

We continue to focus on our higher rated premises and we delivered targeted training to care home premises to try and improve and maintain hygiene ratings in this sector. Our aim is to continue with this targeted training this year with those food business sectors that consistently have poor food safety compliance.

5.3 Hygiene Rating Changes

A new measure available to us is the use of the Food Standards Agency Hygiene Rating Score. As this score does not take into account the inherent risk associated with business, it may be a more relevant measure. We now have 990 premises rated under the scheme.

Over the last three years we have seen a steady increase in the numbers of premises that are broadly compliant (in this case premises rated as a three or above) as follows:-

	2014	2015	2016
Establishments with rating of 3 or better	88%	90%	92.1%

Currently 92.1% of our premises have a rating of 3 or above; this is an increase of 2.1% on last year. In respect of any premises that have been subject to a re-inspection, since Great Yarmouth have been taking part in the scheme, 38.8% of our premises have improved their rating, 42.6% of premises have stayed at the same rating and 17% of our premises have gone down a rating.

For those premises that have requested a re-score, 92.7% improved their rating.

Currently we have 11 zero rated premises which is 1.7% of our total premises. It is pleasing to note that this has decreased from 2.4% in the last six months.

The team currently focus our attention in securing improvements with these premises through a range of intervention tools including enforcement where necessary. Further work will be undertaken to try and investigate reasons why some food premises have seen a decrease in their rating.

In comparison with other local authorities, 94.8% of premises in the Eastern Region have a rating of 3 or above and nationally this is 93.5%. Although our figure of 92.1% is below the national average, the Great Yarmouth area has a significant turnover of food businesses season to season which means that a lot of the work officers do with our food business owners is not sustained from one season to the next.

Our aim is to look at additional methods we can use to engage with our new businesses, especially those that only open for the short summer season.

5.4 Corporate Performance Measures

The data relating to the movement of premises by risk rating is fed into two corporate measures. These are the number of businesses moving down a risk rating band and the number of businesses moving up a band. The results of the data for the first six months from April 2015 - August 2015 were as follows:-

CM36 – 34% of food businesses moved down a risk rating band after assessment –this is compared to 37.5% for the total for 2015;

CM37 – 19% of food businesses moved up a risk rating band after assessment – this is compared to 17% for the total for 2015.

As previously anticipated, downward movement has begun to plateau as businesses have inherent risk that is considered as part of the risk rating; we will therefore never achieve no risk. This figure needs to be considered as part of the overall picture of movement, which shows that currently 47% of businesses are remaining within the same risk band.

These figures will need to be considered in context as they only cover six months of data from April 2015 –August 2015 as the corporate measures are currently being reviewed for the next financial year.

5.5 Comparison with Eastern Region Authorities and the National Average

It is difficult to compare our performance using the annual return (LAEMS) that is sent to the Food Standards Agency as the team do not assess premises using the same methodology as our colleagues in the Eastern Region. However, following discussions

with the Food Standards Agency the team is looking to review this element of the delivery of the service. Currently the data for 2015/2016 is not available so we are unable to compare our performance this year.

5.6 Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is essential and was identified as a key element following review of the service..

To help identify where to focus and deliver the value work in more effective and efficient ways, the team are gathering information to help us identify areas and ways that we can work smarter with the available resource and staff. As part of this we need to consider the following:-

5.6.1 Business type against outcome of assessment

This data is used to determine where we will be focusing our resources. Data from last year suggests that an unacceptable number of our small retailers are unsafe at first assessment. Further guidance will be provided to businesses in this sector.

5.6.2 Types of assessment

Currently the majority of assessments undertaken at a food business are still a full assessment.

There is an assessment tool kit that officers are free to use where appropriate, and on subsequent inspections to premises officers can use the range of assessments at their discretion. This ranges from verification checks to E. Coli checks and sampling assessments etc. First assessments must be a full assessment; however, subsequent interventions are at the discretion of the officer.

5.6.3 Types of unsafe

Data around the types of unsafes allows the team to focus on what is actually making a food business unsafe and tailor their make safe tools accordingly. In addition to this, smarter ways of working will also be undertaken, for example rather than providing training on a one-to-one basis with businesses, group training focusing on some of the main unsafes identified, such as temperature control or hand washing, may be a more effective way of working.

By defining unsafes the team can become smarter at how they work to achieve changes. Future changes are around making sure officers have a tailored toolkit with them at the time of assessments so that they are ready to address our most common unsafes. Free or low cost training events for food businesses will also be developed using this data.

A piece of work has been carried out to identify what were the main unsafes in our 0-2 hygiene rated premises. These were as follows:-

Type of unsafe	Number of Unsafes Found
Cross contamination	62
WHB lack of hot water dirty etc.	30
General cleanliness	17
Temperature Control	12
Stock rotation	8
Training	6
Structure	5
Total	140

Based on this information, the team will be carrying out an initiative with our 0-2 rated businesses focusing on these unsafes and advising them on how they can improve their Food Hygiene Rating.

5.6.4 Make safe tools

Officers have access to a range of make safe tools that can be utilised to help achieve sustainable changes within the business. Although we do not formally monitor the use of these tools, the team have monthly meetings where officers are free to discuss examples of tools that worked well, or did not work, in order to share learning within the team.

We are always working to enable officers to easily deliver make safe work, and where key make safe tools are identified these are made available to all officers to use at the time of assessments, saving officer time and resources. Examples of this are hand washing kits and a physical contamination book.

6. REVIEW PROCESS

6.1 Review Against the Service Plan

The performance of the Commercial Team against the food service plan will be monitored at the regular team meetings.

In addition, regular one-to-one meetings and bi-annual performance reviews are held with each member of staff in the team. This is to ensure that on-going projects and improvements outlined in this service plan are effectively monitored and managed. The notes for these meetings are documented, along with actions and timescales for relevant staff.

6.2 Areas of Improvement

The programmed projects and work identified in the Food Safety Service Plan for 2014/2015 were all completed. See Section 7 below.

The team are constantly seeking ways to improve service delivery and investigating smarter ways of working by continually reviewing what we do at team meetings and use the opportunity of meetings with other authorities to look at better, more efficient ways of working.

With specific reference to the team's systems thinking approach, action will be taken to ensure original purpose of the service continues to be current and our methods used to meet our purpose remain relevant.

7. PROJECT WORK AND OTHER AREAS OF WORK

The data used to make decisions about project based work within the next 12 months is collected by officers during food safety assessments. The type of information that is being collated about food businesses is determined by our purpose.

7.1 Looking back at 2015-2016 Projects

During 2015-2016 in addition to routine work, the team carried out the following projects and initiatives:-

7.1.1 Residential Care Homes and the Care Sector

In 2013 over half our residential care homes were unsafe. A significant amount of resource was spent improving standards in these premises as they are catering for a vulnerable group. To ensure these improvements were maintained, we invited all our care and nursing homes to a low cost food safety training event. The training focused on new food safety guidance and the types of unsafes that the team were generally finding in these premises. 46 people attended from 21 businesses from the care sector.

7.1.2 Marine Parade and Regent Road Initiative

Marine Parade and Regent Road are some of the main tourist areas in Great Yarmouth and they see a significant influx of tourists during the summer months. We have a large number of food premises in these areas that are subject to a rapid turnover and, therefore, regular changes in Food Business Operator. A survey of all premises was carried out by our Seafront Enforcement Officer, and all premises that were newly opened or were overdue a food visit were inspected during one week prior to the start of the summer season. This was found to be a very successful way of working and it is intended to carry out similar projects this year in our Northern Parishes, mainly Hemsby and Scratby.

7.1.3 Cleansing of Civica database

A significant amount of work has been spent cleansing the Council's Civica database, which was found to contain a significant amount of inaccurate data in respect of our food businesses as we inherited this information when the Service moved over to sharing a

system with Norfolk Trading Standards.

7.1.4 Inspection of Unrated Premises

At the start of 2015 our database was indicating that we had 214 unrated premises. The food team prioritised inspecting these premises and as of 1 April 2015 only 17 unrated premises were left to inspect. Most of these are now newly registered premises and a small number of premises that have been difficult to gain entry into.

7.2 Identified Areas of Work for 2016-2017

Plans for future projects and initiatives are as follows:-

7.2.1 Hemsby, Scratby and California Initiative

These areas, like Marine Parade and Regent Road, also see a significant influx of tourists during the summer months. In this area we have a large number of food premises that are subject to a rapid turnover and, therefore, regular changes in food business operator. Due to the success of our initiative in the other main tourist areas, our aim is to ensure all food businesses in this area are identified and have received a visit prior to the start of the main summer season.

7.2.2 Fats Oils and Greases

Great Yarmouth Borough Council is working in partnership with Anglian Water to ensure that owners and staff of the 1100 plus food premises are aware of how managing food waste and fats, oils and grease can help prevent blocking sinks, pipes and drains, and as part of the 'Love our Seaside' Keep It Clear's new campaign to communicate with residents and businesses in coastal areas.

Food premises will be reminded of their legal responsibilities to dispose safely and legally of any fats, oils and grease and food waste they produce.

7.2.3 Traceability of Meat

Officers during visits have found meat was not being distributed in accordance with the Food Safety legislation. In particular there was no traceability for these products. An officer within the team will be working in partnership with the Food Standards Agency Lead Veterinary Officer for South East England, Dr Luque, to investigate issues of non-compliance.

7.2.4 Work with our 0-2 Hygiene Rated Food Premises

Work has been undertaken to identify the types of unsafes in our 0 to 2 hygiene rated premises. Based on this information, a factsheet will be produced for retailers and our restaurants and takeaways providing information and advice for these businesses around the top unsafe issues. Officers will then be visiting all these premises to discuss this factsheet with the food business operator.

8. CONCLUSIONS

2015/2016 has been very successful for the team. It is pleasing to note that the number of premises inspected during this year rose significantly compared to the previous two years.

The team have managed to nearly eliminate our backlog of food premises due an inspection and prioritise our unrated premises.

There has been a noticeable improvement in our businesses in respect of their Food Hygiene Rating. This has been especially noticeable over the last six months when there has been a significant reduction in our 0 rated premises.

The fundamental changes that were made to the food safety service, following a systems thinking review in 2010 are being maintained to the best of the team's ability. This is reflected in the positive changes in businesses where the team are having an impact.

The team continue to work towards our purpose of ensuring that all food is safe for public consumption.

Appendix A
Organisational Chart for Commercial Team Environmental Services

