Report on the Audit of Local Authority Food Law Service Delivery and Food Business Compliance

Fareham Borough Council
12-13 March 2013

Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

Foreword

Audits of local authorities' feed and food law enforcement services are part of the Food Standards Agency's arrangements to improve consumer protection and confidence in relation to food and feed. These arrangements recognise that the enforcement of UK food and feed law relating to food safety, hygiene, composition, labelling, imported food and feeding stuffs is largely the responsibility of local authorities. These local authority regulatory functions are principally delivered through Environmental Health and Trading Standards Services.

The attached audit report examines the Authority's Food Law Enforcement Service. The assessment includes the local arrangements in place for database management, inspections of food businesses and internal monitoring. It should be acknowledged that there will be considerable diversity in the way and manner in which local authorities may provide their food enforcement services reflecting local needs and priorities.

Agency audits assess local authorities' conformance against the Food Law Enforcement Standard "The Standard", which was published by the Agency as part of the Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities and is available on the Agency's website at: **www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring.**

The main aim of the audit scheme is to maintain and improve consumer protection and confidence by ensuring that local authorities are providing an effective food law enforcement service. The scheme also provides the opportunity to identify and disseminate good practice and provide information to inform Agency policy on food safety, standards and feeding stuffs. Parallel local authority audit schemes are implemented by the Agency's offices in all the devolved countries comprising the UK.

The report contains some statistical data, for example on the number of food premises inspections carried out annually. The Agency's website contains enforcement activity data for all UK local authorities and can be found at: **www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring.**

For assistance, a glossary of technical terms used within this audit report can be found at Annexe C.

Contents

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report records the results of an audit at Fareham Borough Council with regard to food hygiene enforcement, under relevant headings of the Food Standards Agency Food Law Enforcement Standard. The audit focused on the Authority's arrangements for the management of the food premises database, food premises interventions, and internal monitoring. The report has been made available on the Agency's website at: www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring/auditreports. Hard copies are available from the Food Standards Agency's Local Authority Audit and Liaison Division at Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH, Tel: 020 7276 8428.

Reason for the Audit

1.2 The power to set standards, monitor and audit local authority food law enforcement services was conferred on the Food Standards Agency by the Food Standards Act 1999 and the Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009. This audit of Fareham Borough Council was undertaken under section 12(4) of the Act as part of the Food Standards Agency's annual audit programme.

1.3 Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law includes a requirement for competent authorities to carry out internal audits or to have external audits carried out. The purpose of these audits is to verify whether official controls relating to feed and food law are effectively implemented. To fulfil this requirement, the Food Standards Agency, as the central competent authority for feed and food law in the UK has established external audit arrangements. In developing these, the Agency has taken account of the European Commission guidance on how such audits should be conducted.[1]

1.4 The Authority was selected for inclusion in the Food Standards Agency's programme of audits of local authority food law enforcement services because it had not been audited in the past five years by the Agency, and was representative of a geographical mix of four local authorities selected across England.

[1] Commission Decision of 29 September 2006 setting out the guidelines laying down criteria for the conduct of audits under Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on official controls to verify compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules (2006/677/EC).

Scope of the Audit

1.5 The audit examined Fareham Borough Council's arrangements for food premises database management, food premises interventions and internal monitoring, with regard to food hygiene law enforcement. This included a reality check at a food business to assess the effectiveness of official controls implemented by the Authority at the food business premises and, more specifically, the checks carried out by the Authority's officers, to verify food business operator (FBO) compliance with legislative requirements. The scope of the audit also included an assessment of the Authority's overall organisation and management, and the internal monitoring of food hygiene law enforcement activities.

1.6 Assurance was sought that key Authority food hygiene law enforcement systems and arrangements were effective in supporting business compliance, and that local enforcement was managed and delivered effectively. The on-site element of the audit took place at the Authority's Civic Offices, Civic Way, Fareham, Hampshire on 12-13 March 2013.

Background

1.7 Fareham Borough Council is located along the south coast of Hampshire, covering almost thirty square miles between Portsmouth and Southampton. Over recent years the Borough has developed rapidly with the development of extensive areas of housing, shops and commerce, and the population of 111,000 is expected to grow by 5.4 % over the next 20 years.

1.8 In addition to Fareham town centre, there are several other important local centres based on former villages. Portchester lies to the east of Fareham town with Stubbington and Hill Head to the south. To the west are Titchfield, Warsash Park Gate, Locks Heath and Whiteley.

1.9 The Food Safety function was undertaken by the Food, Health and Safety team of the Environmental Health Section, within the Regulatory and Democratic Services Department. The Director of Democratic and Regulatory Services reported directly to the Chief Executive Officer and was responsible for the Food Safety Service delivery, with the Head of Environmental Health being responsible for day to day management.

1.10 The Authority reported the profile of Fareham Borough Council's food businesses as of 31 March 2012 as follows :

Type of Food Premises	Number
Primary Producers	5
Manufacturers/Packers	28
Importers/Exporters	0
Distributors/Transporters	19
Retailers	138
Restaurant/Caterers	565
Total Number of Food Premises	**755**

2.0 Executive Summary

2.1 The detailed findings of the audit are set out across the range of activities examined during the audit. While the report sets out a number of recommendations the Authority was in general found to be in broad compliance with the Food Law Code of Practice (FLCoP) and Framework Agreement. It was noted the Authority had also clearly demonstrated innovation and good practice.

2.2 A comprehensive Food Enforcement Service Plan for 2012/13 had been developed, based upon the Service Planning Guidance in the Framework Agreement. The Plan was well structured but would benefit from the inclusion of the corporate performance indicator relating to the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

2.3 The Service Plan detailed priorities for the intervention programme and auditors confirmed that the Authority had generally adopted a risk-based approach to the programme. Inspections had in general been conducted at the minimum frequencies required by the FLCoP.

2.4 A procedure for the Competency and Authorisation of Food Enforcement Officers had been developed. The procedure confirmed that officer authorisations were assigned on the basis of qualifications, experience and competence, however authorisation schedules required review to ensure they included all relevant legislative references. Qualification and training records demonstrated that officers were appropriately qualified, however the Authority needed to ensure officers were receiving the minimum 10 hours relevant training per annum based on the principles of continuing professional development.

2.5 The Authority operated a database capable of providing monitoring returns to the Agency. The accuracy of the database was maintained through procedures, a computerised business process management system, links with the local and national Land and Property Gazetteer, and an innovative computerised internal monitoring system.

2.6 The Authority's Enforcement Policy had recently been approved, and set out a graduated approach to enforcement in accordance with the FLCoP. Procedures had been developed for specific enforcement actions and food law enforcement activities and a complete review of all procedures was being undertaken at the time of the audit. The Authority provided evidence of a range of formal enforcement actions that had been taken to secure business compliance. Checks on formal notices confirmed they were appropriate for the circumstances, and had been drafted, authorised, and served in accordance with centrally issued guidance. Similarly, records of a prosecution and a simple caution were found to be appropriate, with detailed records and evidence retained on file.

2.7 File checks provided evidence of detailed inspections being undertaken with clear recording of the officers' findings. Inspection documentation included a pre-inspection form, an aide-memoire and additional documents which had been developed in relation to the Agency's cross-contamination guidance. However the aide-memoire used for recording inspection findings would benefit from further development to include prompts for officers on traceability, reasons for the allocation of any extra scoring applied for significant risks and the supply of food to schools or vulnerable groups. The Authority had also developed an innovative scheme to provide details and photographic evidence of remedial action required following inspections and enabled the food business operator (FBO) to notify the Authority once the works had been completed.

2.8 A number of cold stores within the Authority required approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004. Files showed that establishments had been approved in a timely manner, however in some cases relevant business information relating to Annex 10 of the Food Law Practice Guidance had not been recorded. The use of appropriate product specific aides-memoire would assist the Authority in consistently undertaking and recording assessments under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004.

2.9 A verification visit was made during the audit to a nursery and respite centre for children, with the officer who carried out the last inspection. This confirmed that the officer was familiar with the operations at the business, had a good working relationship with the FBO, and had appropriately assessed the business' compliance with legal requirements.

2.10 The Authority had developed policies for food sampling and for the investigation of food and food premises complaints, which were supported by procedures providing practical guidance to officers. File and record checks confirmed thorough and timely investigations were being undertaken with appropriate follow-up action taken where necessary. Comprehensive records were also being maintained.

2.11 Records of food law enforcement activities were held electronically on a paperless computerised document management system and were found to be easily retrievable, legible, and comprehensive.

2.12 Whilst there was evidence of qualitative and quantitative internal monitoring being carried out, not all monitoring activities had been documented and recorded. An internal audit had been carried out in 2010 by an independent auditing company appointed by the Authority to ensure that adequate and effective controls were in place in a number of areas, including food safety. The audit found that systems were on the whole sound with all key controls in place. The Authority had also taken part in benchmarking using the Hampshire Matrix and had subsequently improved customer communications.

3.0 Audit Findings

3.1 Organisations and Management

Strategic Framework, Policy and Service Planning

3.1.1 The Authority had developed and implemented a comprehensive Food Safety Service Plan for 2012/13 which had been approved by elected members at the Public Protection Policy Development and Review Panel, the Executive, and the Council. The Plan had been drafted in accordance with the Service Planning Guidance in the Framework Agreement, but would benefit from the inclusion of the corporate performance indicator used by the Service relating to the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

3.1.2 The Service Plan set out the links to the Corporate Priority of making Fareham "A safe and healthy place to live and work" and identified the Service objectives as to:

- Ensure that all businesses involved in the preparation, sale, distribution or handling of food comply with food safety legislation and the requirements of codes of practice issued by the Food Standards Agency.

- Minimise the spread of incidents of infectious diseases including incidents of food poisoning by investigating relevant cases and taking action to control the spread of disease.

3.1.3 The Plan also outlined the Fareham and Gosport Environmental Health Partnership Initiative developed in January 2011. Under this initiative the Head of Environmental Health is responsible for both Fareham and Gosport Environmental Services. The Authority had participated in the Hampshire Better Regulation Partnership since 2011.

Documented Policies and Procedures

3.1.4 The Authority had developed documented policies and procedures for food law enforcement activities which provided useful guidance to officers. The policies had been recently reviewed and the Service was in the process of reviewing the procedures.

3.1.5 A computerised "business process management system" had been developed to assist in maintaining the quality and consistency of food law enforcement activities and interventions through the management of critical process control points within food law enforcement activities. The system also allowed scanned records to be effectively maintained

alongside other inspection records, providing officers and management with a comprehensive chronological history for each establishment. The system had been developed in-house, and included useful visual prompts to highlight any overdue enforcement actions relating to businesses. Inspection and some enforcement procedures for officers had been usefully combined with specific work instructions on using the management system. However the Authority needed to ensure that these procedures were reviewed at regular intervals to include all relevant legal references and centrally issued guidance.

Good Practice - Business Process Management System

The Authority had developed a computerised business process management system which helped manage critical process control points during food law enforcement and interventions. This provided prompts and guidance for officers helping maintain consistency and quality.

Recommendation

3.1.6 The Authority should:

Ensure that all documented procedures are reviewed at regular intervals. [The Standard – 4. 1]

Officer Authorisations

3.1.7 The Authority had developed a procedure for the authorisation of food enforcement officers. This confirmed that officer authorisations were assigned on the basis of qualifications, experience and competence.

3.1.8 Officers' authorisation documents generally contained references to all relevant food hygiene legislation in accordance with the FLCoP, but required further review to include specific reference to the General Food Regulations 2004.

3.1.9 Checks on records of training undertaken by a selection of officers confirmed that officers were appropriately qualified, however the Authority was unable to demonstrate that all officers had received the minimum 10 hours relevant training per annum based on the principles of continuing professional development.

Recommendation

3.1.10 The Authority should:

Ensure that officers receive and record the minimum ten hours relevant training per annum based on the principles of continuing professional development.
[The Standard – 5.4 and 5.5]

3.2 Food Premises Database

3.2.1 The Service operated a computer database system that was capable of providing the returns required for the Agency's Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS). Systems were in place for back up and maintaining the security of the electronic database, including disaster recovery.

3.2.2 Documented procedures and the computerised business process management system helped maintain the accuracy of the database by guiding officers as to what information and activities should be entered on the database. Accuracy was also maintained through links with the local and National Land and Property Gazetteer.

3.2.3 The Service was able to demonstrate its ability to provide a range of detailed and useful reports from its database required for the effective management of its intervention programme.

3.2.4 Checks carried out prior to and during the audit, including internet searches, confirmed that the data held was generally accurate.

3.2.5 The Authority had fully utilised the potential of its existing database and created an automated computerised internal monitoring system which ran on a weekly basis. The system checked that record entries were complete and produced a report highlighting any deficiencies.

Good Practice - Automated Internal Monitoring

The Authority had developed a computerised internal monitoring system which regularly automatically ran and produced reports to monitor data entries for food law enforcement activities.

3.3 Food Premises Interventions

3.3.1 The Authority provided a breakdown of food businesses in the area as follows:

Premises Risk Category	Number of Premises
A	10
B	40
C	252
D	156
E	213
Unrated	12
Outside programme	83
TOTAL	**766**

3.3.2 The Service Plan set out the food hygiene inspection programme for 2011/12 as follows:

Premises Risk Category	Inspection Interval	Number of Inspections Due
A, B and non compliant C	6,12 and 18 months	78
Compliant C, D and E	18 month, 2 years and 3 years	304
TOTAL		382

3.3.3 The Plan also set out the priorities for the inspection programme. Risk category A and B premises would receive a food hygiene inspection every 12 or 18 months as appropriate. Category C premises which were not broadly compliant would be inspected every 18 months, and category C broadly compliant premises would be inspected every 18 months, alternating between inspections and alternative interventions.

3.3.4 Data provided prior to and during the audit confirmed the Authority was generally carrying out interventions at the minimum intervals required by the FLCoP and newly registered businesses were routinely assessed and integrated into the intervention programme on a risk basis. Reports produced during the audit found that there were a small number of lower risk inspections outstanding for the year. The Authority had made arrangements under its partnership agreement for officers from Gosport to assist with inspections and the Authority was on target to fully complete its programme.

3.3.5 File checks of inspections carried out by different officers at food businesses were checked during the audit. There was evidence that

officers were assessing businesses against all relevant legislation, including an assessment of HACCP requirements at each inspection. Risk ratings had been allocated in accordance with the FLCoP and were generally appropriate given the inspection findings. Computer records were up to date and accurate.

3.3.6 The Authority provided detailed and comprehensive letters and advice to businesses concerning inspection findings, including the use of photographs where appropriate. In medium and lower risk establishments FBOs were provided with the opportunity to certify that all action required had been taken following inspections. These actions would then be checked at the next inspection and appropriate enforcement taken on any further non-compliance. The Authority reported that this method had been a useful and cost effective method for improving business compliance in the area. Auditors discussed the possibility of introducing further assessment of this method to help measure and demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach in achieving business compliance.

Good Practice - FBO Certification of Compliance

The Authority had developed a “certification of compliance” system for traders where remedial action was required by the food business operator (FBO). This provided the FBO with details and photographs as appropriate of remedial action and work required. FBOs were invited to certify that all action required by officers had been taken.

3.3.7 Checks on aides-memoire demonstrated that detailed inspections and interventions were being carried out with clear recording of actions and contraventions. Officers clearly identified any breaches of relevant legislation. However the aide-memoire used for recording inspection findings would benefit from expansion in certain areas to prompt officers to record traceability details, the specific reasons for the allocation of any extra scoring applied for significant risks found and any other relevant issues, such as the supply of food to schools or vulnerable groups.

3.3.8 The Authority had a small number of cold stores in its area approved under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004. Files examined relating to the business showed that they had been approved in a timely manner in accordance with the appropriate legislation. However in some cases business information relating to Annex 10 of the Food Law Practice Guidance had not been recorded. The Authority would also benefit from the use of appropriate product specific aides-memoire which would assist officers in consistently undertaking and recording assessments made under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004.

Recommendation

3.3.9 The Authority should:

Ensure inspections at product-specific establishments subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 are recorded on the appropriate product specific aides-memoire. [The Standard – 7.3 and 16.1]

Verification Visit to a Food Premises

3.3.10 A verification visit was undertaken to a nursery and respite centre for children, with an experienced officer of the Authority who had carried out the last food hygiene inspection of the premises. The main objective of the visit was to assess the effectiveness of the Authority's assessment of food business compliance with food law requirements. The specific assessments included the conduct of the preliminary interview of the FBO by the officer, the general hygiene checks to verify compliance with the structure and hygiene practice requirements and checks carried out by the officer to verify compliance with HACCP based procedures.

3.3.11 The officer was able to demonstrate general familiarity with the premises and had a good understanding of the key operations carried out at the business including the adequacy of the operator's food safety management system.

3.4 Enforcement

3.4.1 The Council had approved a Fareham and Gosport Environmental Health Partnership Enforcement Policy in 2012 and had produced a summary leaflet to be sent out with correspondence relating to enforcement action. The policy generally reflected a graduated approach to enforcement and contained guidance on enforcement actions in accordance with the FLCoP.

3.4.2 Records of three hygiene improvement notices were examined. These were all found to be appropriate for the circumstances, drafted in accordance with centrally issued guidance, and signed by a correctly authorised officer who had witnessed the contravention. There was evidence that the notices had been properly served and that timely checks on compliance had been made following their expiry.

3.4.3 Records for one prosecution and a simple caution were examined. Detailed records and evidence for each case had been retained on file and confirmed that actions had been taken in accordance with the Authority's Enforcement Policy and in line with the FLCoP.

3.5 Internal Monitoring, Third Party or Peer Review

Internal Monitoring

3.5.1 The Authority had developed a documented procedure for Managing Quality and Consistency, which included the use of an electronic based process management system for food enforcement work. This detailed a checklist for food law activities which provided a useful tool to ensure quality and consistency. Under this procedure 10% of completed work was checked by the team leader.

3.5.2 The automated computerised monitoring system had also been introduced which ran weekly checks to ensure data entries were complete. Any deficiencies were reported and then corrected.

3.5.3 Peer review quality checks were carried out through joint inspections, the outcomes of which were discussed at team meetings, however recent meetings and actions had not been documented.

3.5.4 Whilst there was evidence of qualitative and quantitative internal monitoring taking place across a range of food enforcement activities, the Authority needed to ensure appropriate records were maintained for all monitoring.

Recommendation

3.5.5 The Authority should:

Ensure records of all internal monitoring are maintained. [The Standard – 19.3]

Food and Food Premises Complaints

3.5.6 The Authority had a policy and documented procedures for the investigation of food premises and food hygiene complaints. The procedures provided useful guidance for officers, however the food hygiene complaints procedure was dated 2002 and required review.

3.5.7 Checks made on records for five food and food premises complaints showed that officers had carried out thorough, detailed, timely and appropriate investigations. Comprehensive records of investigations had been maintained and all interested parties were informed of progress of the investigation.

3.5.8 The Authority had introduced a “tracker” system for complaints, providing complainants with immediate internet access to records to check the progress of complaints.

Good Practice – Complaint Tracker System

The Authority had developed an internet based complaint tracker system which provided complainants with electronic access to check the progress of their complaint.

Food Inspection and Sampling

3.5.9 The Food Safety Service Plan set out the Authority’s food sampling policy and the sampling programme for the year. Routine sampling was recognised as an important part of the work of the Service and the programme included national, regional and locally co-ordinated sampling, as well as sampling arising from complaints, food poisoning investigations and inspections.

3.5.10 File checks confirmed that samples had been taken in accordance with the Authority’s sampling policy. The samples had been taken by a trained authorised officer and appropriate follow-up action had been taken based on the results.

Records

3.5.11 Most records of food law enforcement activities were maintained electronically on a paperless document management system. The Authority had invested in the development of the bespoke computerised system and records across the range of food law enforcement activities were easily retrievable, legible and comprehensive.

Third Party or Peer Review

3.5.12 The Authority was a member of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Food Advisory Committee which had previously engaged in inter-authority auditing which had subsequently been discontinued.

3.5.13 An internal audit had been carried out in 2010 by an independent auditing company appointed by the Authority. The audit was designed to assess whether management had implemented adequate and effective controls regarding health and safety and food safety

enforcement activities. The audit covered areas which were relevant to the Standard in the Framework Agreement and included data quality testing for accuracy of LAEMS returns. The report found that systems were generally sound with all key controls in place. The report did however make recommendations in regard to the review of policy and procedures.

3.5.14 The Authority had previously participated in benchmarking their services using the Hampshire Matrix, and had taken action to improve customer communications as a result of the exercise.

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Food Standards Agency
Local Authority Audit and Liaison Division

ANNEXE A Action Plan for Fareham Borough Council

Audit date: 12-13 March 2013

TO ADDRESS (RECOMMENDATION INCLUDING STANDARD PARAGRAPH)	BY (DATE)	PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS	ACTION TAKEN TO DATE
3.1.6 Ensure that all documented procedures are reviewed at regular intervals. [The Standard – 4. 1]	31/12/13	• Programme to review current procedures and produce procedures for Remedial Action Notices and Detention Notices in progress. • Procedures are now a standing item on the Food team meeting agenda's.	• Master list of procedures produced with review dates included. • 50% of current procedures have been reviewed and updated where necessary.
3.1.10 Ensure that officers receive and record the minimum ten hours relevant training per annum based on the principles of continuing professional development. [The Standard – 5.4 and 5.5]	01/04/13 and ongoing	• Continue to have standard item on team meetings agendas and monitoring of Officer attainment. • Issues of concern to be reported upwards to the Head of EH at 121's with team leader.	• Officer training is now a standard item on monthly team meeting agenda. This includes a review of each officers CPD attainment to date and also ensuring that all training is accurately recorded. • Officer training and development is part of the Council's employee performance and development programme requirement recognised in revised corporate training plan.

TO ADDRESS (RECOMMENDATION INCLUDING STANDARD PARAGRAPH)	BY (DATE)	PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS	ACTION TAKEN TO DATE
3.3.9 Ensure inspections at product-specific establishments subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 are recorded on the appropriate product specific aides-memoire. [The Standard – 7.3 and 16.1]	31/07/13	• A review of existing approved establishments to be undertaken to ensure all correct documentation is held on file.	• Procedures have been updated in respect of Product Specific Approvals. • A Business Process Management System (BPMS) checklist has been put into place and is now live. Checklist includes a link to website and instruction re specific inspection pro-formas.
3.5.5 Ensure records of all internal monitoring are maintained. [The Standard – 19.3]	31/07/13 and ongoing	• Inspection proforma to be amended to include more detail about traceability. • Code to be added to database to enable premises to be easily identified that are supplying vulnerable groups.	• Standard team meeting Agenda re-established and the recording of minutes. • Officer consistency is a standard item on the agenda. • Codes in database introduced to enable monitoring self-certification of compliance returns. • FHRS local indicator included in Food Safety Plan for 2013/14 and approved by Executive at meeting on 13/05/13.

ANNEXE B Audit Approach/Methodology

The audit was conducted using a variety of approaches and methodologies as follows:

(1) Examination of LA policies and procedures.

The following LA policies, procedures and linked documents were examined before and during the audit:

- Food Safety Service Plan for 2012/13
- Fareham and Gosport Environmental Health Partnership Enforcement Policy 2012
- Team meeting agendas and minutes
- Public Protection Policy Development and Review Panel, the Executive, and Council minutes.
- Service policies and procedures
- Food premises inspection procedure and aide-memoire
- Database work instructions
- Internal Audit Report 2010
- Officer authorisation, training and qualification records.

(2) File reviews – the following LA file records were reviewed during the audit:

- General food premises inspection records
- Approved establishment records
- Food complaint records
- Food sampling records
- Formal enforcement records.

(3) Review of database records:

- To review and assess the completeness of database records of food hygiene inspections, food and food premises complaint investigations, samples taken by the authority, formal enforcement and other activities and to verify consistency with file records.
- To assess the completeness and accuracy of the food premises database.
- To assess the capability of the system to generate food law enforcement activity reports and the monitoring information required by the Food Standards Agency.

(4) Officer interviews – the following officers were interviewed:

- Head of Environmental Health
- 1 Environmental Health Officer

Opinions and views raised during officer interviews remain confidential and are not referred to directly within the report.

(5) On site verification check:

A verification visit was made with the Authority's officers to a local food business. The purpose of the visit was to verify the outcome of the last inspection carried out by the Local Authority and to assess the extent to which enforcement activities and decisions met the requirements of relevant legislation, the Food Law Code of Practice and official guidance, having particular regard to LA checks on FBO compliance with HACCP based food management systems.

ANNEXE C Glossary

Authorised officer	A suitably qualified officer who is authorised by the local authority to act on its behalf in, for example, the enforcement of legislation.
Broadly Compliant	An outcome measure which the Food Standard Agency has developed with local authorities to monitor the effectiveness of the regulatory service relating to food law. It is based on the risk rating scheme in the Food Law Code of Practice which is currently used by food law enforcement officers to assess premises which pose the greatest risk to consumers failing to comply with food law.
Codes of Practice	Government Codes of Practice issued under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990 as guidance to local authorities on the enforcement of food legislation.
County Council	A local authority whose geographical area corresponds to the county and whose responsibilities include food standards and feeding stuffs enforcement.
District Council	A local authority of a smaller geographical area and situated within a County Council whose responsibilities include food hygiene enforcement.
E.coli O157	E.coli O157 belongs to the group of verotoxigenic E.coli (VTEC) bacteria which are a toxin-producing strain of Escherichia coli that occur naturally in the gastrointestinal tract of animals such as cattle and sheep, and are pathogenic to humans. E.coli O157 is the VTEC strain that has been most commonly implicated in human infection in the UK.
Enhanced Remote Transit Shed	A warehouse designated by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), where goods are temporarily stored pending clearance by HMRC, and prior to release into free circulation.
Environmental Health Officer (EHO)	Officer employed by the local authority to enforce food safety legislation.
Feeding stuffs	Term used in legislation on feed mixes for farm animals and pet food.

Food hygiene	The legal requirements covering the safety and wholesomeness of food.
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)	The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme provides information to the public about hygiene standards in catering and retail food establishments. It is run by local authorities in partnership with the Food Standards Agency. Businesses that fall within the scope of the scheme are given a 'hygiene rating' which shows how closely the business was meeting the requirements of food hygiene law at the time of inspection. The scheme also encourages businesses to improve hygiene standards.
Food Safety Management System	A written permanent procedure, or procedures, based on HACCP principles. It is structured so that this requirement can be applied flexibly and proportionately according to the size and nature of the food business.
Food standards	The legal requirements covering the quality, composition, labelling, presentation and advertising of food, and materials in contact with food.
Framework Agreement	The Framework Agreement consists of: • Food and Feed Law Enforcement Standard • Service Planning Guidance • Monitoring Scheme • Audit Scheme The **Standard** and the **Service Planning Guidance** set out the Agency's expectations on the planning and delivery of food and feed law enforcement. The **Monitoring Scheme** requires local authorities to submit yearly returns via LAEMS to the Agency on their food enforcement activities i.e. numbers of inspections, samples and prosecutions. Under the **Audit Scheme** the Food Standards Agency will be conducting audits of the food and feed law enforcement services of local authorities against the criteria set out in the Standard.
Full Time Equivalents (FTE)	A figure which represents that part of an individual officer's time available to a particular role or set of duties. It reflects the fact that individuals may work part-time, or may have other responsibilities within the organisation not related to food and feed

	enforcement.
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point – a food safety management system used within food businesses to identify points in the production process where it is critical for food safety that the control measure is carried out correctly, thereby eliminating or reducing the hazard to a safe level.
LAEMS	Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System is an electronic system used by local authorities to report their food law enforcement activities to the Food Standards Agency.
Member forum	A local authority forum at which Council Members discuss and make decisions on food law enforcement services.
Metropolitan Authority	A local authority normally associated with a large urban conurbation in which the County and District Council functions are combined.
Risk rating	A system that rates food premises according to risk and determines how frequently those premises should be inspected. For example, high risk premises should be inspected at least every 6 months.
Safer food, better business (SFBB)	A food safety management system, developed by the Food Standards Agency to help small catering and retail businesses put in place food safety management procedures and comply with food hygiene regulations.
Service Plan	A document produced by a local authority setting out their plans on providing and delivering a food service to the local community.
Trading Standards	The Department within a local authority which carries out, amongst other responsibilities, the enforcement of food standards and feeding stuffs legislation.
Trading Standards Officer (TSO)	Officer employed by the local authority who, amongst other responsibilities, may enforce food standards and feeding stuffs legislation.
Unitary Authority	A local authority in which the County and District Council functions are combined, examples being Metropolitan District/Borough Councils, and London

Boroughs. A Unitary Authority's responsibilities will include food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs enforcement.