

**Report on the Audit of Local Authority Food Law
Service Assessment of Food Businesses'
Food Safety Management System (FSMS)**

Taunton Deane Borough Council
16-17 March 2010



Foreword

Audits of local authorities' food law enforcement services are part of the Food Standards Agency's arrangements to improve consumer protection and confidence in relation to food. These arrangements recognise that the enforcement of UK food 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 Agency's website contains enforcement activity data for all UK local authorities and can be found at: www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring.

The attached audit report examines the Local Authority's Food Law Enforcement Service. The assessment includes the local arrangements in place for officer authorisation and training, inspections of food businesses and internal monitoring. The audit scope was developed specifically to address Recommendations 9 and 15 of the Public Inquiry Report¹ into the 2005 E. coli outbreak at Bridgend, Wales. The programme focused on the local authority's training provision to ensure that all officers who check Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) and HACCP based plans, including those responsible for overseeing the work of those officers, have the necessary knowledge and skills. Also, that existing inspection arrangements and processes to assess and enforce HACCP related food safety requirements in food businesses are adequate, risk based, and able to effect any changes necessary to secure improvements.

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 Local Authority Food Law Enforcement and is available on the Agency's website at:

www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring. 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.

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.

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

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/ecolidocs/3008707/reporten.pdf?skip=1&lang=en>

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report records the results of an audit at Taunton Deane 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 food premises inspections, enforcement activities 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 Taunton Deane Borough Council was undertaken under section 12(4) of the Act as part of the Food Standards Agency's annual audit programme.
- 1.3 The Authority was included 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 by the Agency and was representative of a geographical mix of 25 Councils selected across England.

Scope of the Audit

- 1.4 The audit examined Taunton Deane Borough Council's arrangements for food premises inspections and internal monitoring with regard to food hygiene law enforcement, with particular emphasis on officer competencies in assessing food safety management systems based on HACCP principles. 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 other related food hygiene law enforcement activities.
- 1.5 Assurance was sought that key 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 office at the Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, on 16-17 March 2010.

Background

- 1.6 The Borough of Taunton Deane is situated in Somerset, with the main town Taunton also being the county town. The Borough has a population of just over 105,000, with Taunton itself having a population of around 60,000. The town forms an important regional centre for shopping, commerce and education. The remainder of the area is predominantly rural, with the settlements of Milverton and Wiveliscombe in the west of the district.
- 1.7 The Food Safety Team was responsible for enforcing food hygiene legislation in the Borough. There are approximately 980 food premises in the district, comprising mainly small to medium catering and retail enterprises. The Authority reported there were 12 establishments in the Authority's area which required approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004.
- 1.8 The profile of Taunton Deane Borough Council's food businesses as of 31 March 2009 was as follows:

Type of food premises	Number
Distributors/Transporters	8
Manufacturers/Packers	66
Retailers	164
Restaurant/Caterers	741
Total number of food premises	979

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 At the time of the audit the Authority was undergoing a restructuring process which had resulted in a number of key personnel recently assuming new responsibilities. The Service was being managed by an Acting Principal Environmental Health Officer reporting to an Acting Operations Manager. In addition there had been some staff vacancies and long term absences within the Food Safety Team. A priority had been placed on achieving the food premises inspection programme, in particular the inspection of high risk premises.
- 2.2 The Authority had implemented a Food Service Plan for 2009/2010 that was broadly in line with the Service Planning Guidance in the Framework Agreement. The Plan would benefit from containing greater detail on the planned interventions programme for the year, and a clear comparison of the resources required to deliver the food service against the staff resources available to the Authority.
- 2.3 The Authority had documented procedures on the authorisation of officers which took account of officer qualifications, experience and competency. A combination of warrant cards and authorisation memoranda needed some expansion to cover the full range of legislation under which officers should be authorised. It was clear that the Authority had a proactive approach to officer training and that there had been recent training on the evaluation and assessment of food safety management systems and on vacuum packing.
- 2.4 The Authority had reviewed its enforcement arrangements in the light of the recommendations arising from the Pennington Inquiry into the E. coli outbreak in Wales. Whilst the majority of procedures were considered to be satisfactory, some improvements were identified by the team, including a review of the inspection aide-memoire to further prompt officers to record adequate detail of their assessment of the HACCP based controls implemented by the FBO. In general officers were recording adequate detail on inspections to confirm that an effective assessment of the businesses food safety management system (FSMS) was being made.
- 2.5 The number of approved establishments in the District had recently increased and arrangements were being made to share enforcement in such premises between three officers rather than one specialist officer. There was some inconsistency in the level of detail recorded on files for approved establishments, but in general it was evident that appropriate assessments of the businesses' compliance were being carried out.
- 2.6 The Authority advised that they had not undertaken any recent food sampling activity. The Authority had however produced a comprehensive sampling programme, policy and procedure. It is

understood that the Authority intends participating in relevant sampling programmes in the next year.

- 2.7 The Authority had implemented a policy and procedures on the investigation of food and food premises complaints. Record checks indicated that officers had taken appropriate action in investigating complaints relating to alleged failings of businesses FSMS.
- 2.8 It was clear that the Authority had adopted a graduated approach to enforcement where businesses had consistently failed to properly implement a FSMS, and the full range of enforcement options was being effectively used. There were some historical issues relating to enforcement actions, however the most recent hygiene improvement notices (HIN) and hygiene emergency improvement notice (HEPN) had been carried out in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice and other relevant guidance.
- 2.9 The Authority had developed comprehensive internal monitoring procedures covering the range of enforcement activities carried out by the team. Records of internal monitoring were also being maintained. Updates were regularly produced and circulated to Members detailing the results of quantitative monitoring activities such as progress against the food premises inspection programme. In addition there were regular case load reviews and a system of peer review of inspections and enforcement activities.
- 2.10 A reality check visit at a food business was undertaken during the audit. The main objective was to assess the effectiveness of the Authority's assessment of food business compliance with food law requirements. The officer was able to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the FSMS in place, and it was possible to confirm that the officer had carried out an effective and thorough evaluation of the compliance of the food business at the most recent inspection.

3. Audit Findings

3.1 Organisation and Management

Strategic Framework, Policy and Service Planning

- 3.1.1 The Authority had developed an Environmental Health Service Plan 2009/2010 which had been drawn up broadly in line with the Service Planning Guidance in the Framework Agreement. The Plan had not received senior level clearance as it was considered unnecessary as the teams' activities were largely governed by statute. The Plan encompassed all areas of the Environmental Health Service and clearly set out the priorities, general objectives for the forthcoming year and a review of the previous year's achievements. The Plan would benefit from the inclusion of details of the food premises profile and the proposed intervention programme for the year, and a clear comparison of the staff resources required to deliver the food law enforcement service against the staff resources available to the Authority.

Recommendation

- 3.1.2 The Authority should:

Ensure that future Food Service Plans are in line with the Service Planning Guidance in the Framework Agreement, including details of the inspection programme for the year and the staffing resources required to provide the food law enforcement service compared with the staffing resources available to the Authority. [The Standard – 3.1]

- 3.1.3 The strategic aims of the Environmental Health Service were to:

- a) safeguard the health, safety and welfare of those who live and work in the Borough and those who visit the area*
- b) protect the environment*
- c) safeguard animal health and welfare*
- d) encourage a vibrant local economy and prevent fraud.*

- 3.1.4 The Environmental Health Service Plan set out a work programme for 2009/2010. This included details of external influences that may affect service objectives, including additional ongoing work to configure the database to meet the requirements of the Food Standards Agency's Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS) and to review the Authority's food premises star rating scheme in the light of the national scheme being developed by the Food Standards Agency.

- 3.1.5 The Authority had completed a review against the previous year's Service Plan. Notable achievements included preparation of the database for LAEMS and the provision of a training and advice event for over 250 local food businesses on the implementation of FSMS. The Plan also reported that 86.5% of food premises were broadly compliant with food hygiene legislation in accordance with the criteria for national performance indicator NI184.
- 3.1.6 In addition to the annual review of the Service Plan, the Service provided regular comprehensive updates to Members on progress against key targets such as the monthly and cumulative achievement of the food premises inspection programme. The reports also contained narrative on any issues that had arisen affecting the team including participation in specific projects.
- 3.1.7 The returns made to the Food Standards Agency under the Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS) for 2008/2009 declared that there were 3.65 full time equivalent posts (FTE) allocated to food law enforcement. The Food Team had undergone a number of recent changes in staffing and was undergoing a restructuring process. Auditors were advised that from April 2010 there would be 3.5 officers directly responsible for food safety enforcement 'on the ground'.
- 3.1.8 The Service had provided an information report for Members following the publication of the report of the Pennington Inquiry. The Service had taken measures in response to the recommendations made in the report and included a review of inspection files and a programme of sampling and surface swabbing in butchers' shop premises.

Documented Policies and Procedures

- 3.1.9 The Authority had developed procedures covering a range of food law enforcement issues. The internal monitoring procedure referred to documented procedures being reviewed at least every two years. There was a mechanism for identifying the latest version of procedures by the provision of an issue date and number. Procedures, once drafted or reviewed, were also required to be approved at senior level. Some procedures were noted to be significantly overdue for review.

Recommendation

3.1.10 The Authority should:

Develop a system for the review of internal policies and procedures at regular intervals and whenever there are changes to legislation or centrally issued guidance.
[The Standard – 4.1]

Officer Authorisations

- 3.1.11 The Authority had documented procedures on the authorisation of officers contained in a number of documents. These took account of individual officers' qualifications, experience and competency, however some further clarification was required on the detailed differentiation between the categories of authorisation set out in the Officer Authorisation Policy.
- 3.1.12 Responsibility for the authorisation of officers lay with the Principal Officer for Food Safety, with the authorisations signed off by the Chief Environmental Health Officer. Officers were provided with authorisations which set out the main legislative powers they were authorised under, qualified by individual schedules of authorisation appropriate to the officer's qualifications and experience. These combined schedules required review to ensure they contained all relevant legislative powers available to officers.

Recommendation

3.1.13 The Authority should:

Review the documented procedures on the authorisation of officers to clarify the criteria by which authorisations are conferred based on officer's individual qualifications, training and experience. Ensure that officers are specifically authorised under the full range of relevant legislation.
[The Standard – 5.1]

- 3.1.14 Auditors were advised that an annual performance review system for officers was in place where training needs were discussed. Outcomes from the individual reviews fed into a team 'multi-skilling record', which highlighted where additional team and individual training was required.
- 3.1.15 It was clear that the Authority had been proactive in providing training opportunities and that all authorised officers had achieved the

required minimum 10 hours relevant training, based on the principles of continuing professional development. In terms of specific training on HACCP issues, it was noted that officers had received training on vacuum packing and FSMS auditing and assessment.

- 3.1.16 Audit checks confirmed that evidence of all officers' qualifications was available and that copies of relevant qualification certificates had been retained by the Authority.

3.2 Food Premises Inspections

- 3.2.1 The Authority had developed and implemented a food interventions policy and associated officer guidance, and in addition, guidance on the specific requirements for the inspection and approval of establishments requiring approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004.
- 3.2.2 File and database record checks confirmed that the Authority was, in general, implementing an effective risk based food premises inspection programme, and premises were being inspected at the frequency set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (FLCoP).
- 3.2.3 The Authority operated a “paperless office” system for records storage. Records of inspections were easily retrievable from the system. The form used to record the details of the officers assessments during inspections had been revised to ensure that once fully completed, would capture all relevant information in particular the officers’ assessments of the adequacy of the FSMS in place. Inspection records examined during the audit indicated that in general thorough assessments were being carried out by officers and detailed notes made of inspection findings.
- 3.2.4 Where serious contraventions were identified, correspondence following the inspection indicated that a revisit would be undertaken, and there was evidence to indicate that in general this took place.

Good Practice – Inspections

Where issues were found on inspection that required action by the FBO, the Authority invited the business to complete and return an action plan detailing the works that had been carried out to address the issues, along with documentary evidence. High risk premises were visited to check that the works had been completed, whereas in businesses with a good record of compliance and high confidence in the business management, the action plan and supporting documentation were accepted as evidence, removing the necessity of carrying out a visit to the premises.

- 3.2.5 Reports of inspection or letters were provided to the FBO which contained all the details required by the FLCoP. Correspondence provided clear guidance for the business and consistently differentiated between legal requirements and recommendations of good practice.
- 3.2.6 Files for three approved establishments in the Authority’s area were examined during the audit. Auditors were advised that the arrangements for the inspection of such premises were being

reviewed to ensure that inspections were spread amongst officers within the team rather than being the responsibility of one specialist officer.

- 3.2.7 The quality of information contained within the approved establishment files examined was variable. It was not clear in the case of one establishment that approval was required as there was insufficient information available on the operations in place to confirm the basis of the approval. It was also not possible in the case of another premises to confirm that the establishment had been appropriately re-approved under the requirements of Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004. Files would benefit from review to ensure they all contain the relevant business and operations information recommended in Annexe 12 of the Food Law Practice Guidance.

Recommendation

- 3.2.8 The Authority should:

Maintain up to date, accurate and comprehensive records for all approved establishments subject to Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 in accordance with Annexe 12 of the Food Law Practice Guidance. Establishments should be approved in accordance with relevant legislation and centrally issued guidance. [The Standard – 16.1 and 7.2]

Verification Visit to a Food Premises

- 3.2.9 During the audit, a verification visit was undertaken to a local public house with an officer from 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.
- 3.2.10 The audit visit confirmed that the checks carried out by the officer were thorough and covered relevant food law requirements. The officer demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the FSMS in place at the business. It was evident that a graduated approach to enforcement had also been adopted by the officer, as a hygiene improvement notice had been served following previous visits where contraventions of food hygiene legislation had not been adequately addressed by the FBO. Since then there had been a change in ownership at the premises and it was clear that the officer had

developed a supportive working relationship with the new proprietor who was taking steps to address all the issues inherited from the previous owner.

3.3 Enforcement

- 3.3.1 The Authority had adopted the 'Somerset Authorities Environmental Health Enforcement Policy' which had been published in March 2009. The policy was in accordance with centrally issued guidance and made appropriate reference to Regulator's Compliance Code. The Service had also developed procedural guidance for a range of formal food law enforcement actions. It was noted that the generic prosecution procedure would benefit from review to ensure it reflected current practice.

Good Practice – Enforcement

The Service had produced 'Grab and Go' packs for officers undertaking action under hygiene emergency prohibition procedures and for the surrender, detention or seizure of foods. These contained clear guidance for officers and the appropriate forms necessary for the intended enforcement action.

- 3.3.2 It was clear that the Authority had adopted a graduated approach to enforcement where businesses had consistently failed to implement a FSMS and the full range of enforcement actions had been successfully used by the Service to gain improvements. Examples were available of formal enforcement actions taken by officers in relation to failures by the FBO to provide an adequate FSMS. Whilst there were some anomalies in relation to historic enforcement actions, recently served hygiene improvement notices and a recent hygiene emergency prohibition procedure were found to be generally carried out in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice and other centrally issued guidance.

Good Practice – Graduated enforcement approach

The Service sent letters to identified 'poor performer' food businesses inviting them for informal discussions on the poor standards existing at their business and to agree a way forward to ensure improvements. Where businesses failed to contact the Service, visits were made to the premises to encourage improvements in food hygiene standards and to consider more formal enforcement approach.

- 3.3.3 The Authority had also recently taken two prosecutions against a business in relation to the absence of a FSMS. The action taken was found to be appropriate and followed due legal process. The

prosecution files contained appropriate evidence to support the contraventions. A simple caution had also been served on a business and in general this was found to have been carried out satisfactorily.

3.4 Internal Monitoring and Third Party or Peer Review

Internal Monitoring

- 3.4.1 The Service had developed comprehensive documented internal monitoring procedures covering the range of enforcement activities carried out by the team. Records of monitoring activities were being maintained. A monthly management report was produced and circulated to Members which detailed the results from quantitative analysis, such as adherence to target complaint response times and progress in meeting the food premises inspection programme. The reports also provided some narrative on qualitative issues. In addition the Service operated a system of peer review of inspections and enforcement activities. Any identified issues were raised with individual officers or at regular team meetings as appropriate.

Food and Food Premises Complaints

- 3.4.2 The Authority had developed and implemented both Food Complaint and Food Hygiene Compliant Investigation policies containing detailed procedural advice. The records for six food and food premises complaint investigations relating to FSMS issues were examined. These confirmed that in general complaints were appropriately investigated and follow-up action taken as necessary.

Food Sampling

- 3.4.3 The Authority had developed a Food Safety Sampling Policy which had been revised in 2005. A food sampling procedure had also been developed and reviewed in 2009. A food sampling programme had been drawn up for the year, however the auditors were advised that due to a lack of resources, no food sampling had been carried out in the last six months. It was however the intention to participate in LACORS sampling programmes for the year 2010/2011.

Third Party or Peer Review

- 3.4.4 Auditors were informed that the Authority had participated in the Somerset inter-authority audit scheme and had undergone an audit focusing on food sampling activities in February 2009. Previous focused audits had taken place within the county on approved establishments, and officer authorisations.
- 3.4.5 In addition the Service had undergone an external audit by the South West Audit Partnership in July 2009 and an action plan had been agreed.

3.4.6 Officers had also attended county-wide consistency training and exercises, followed by in-house consistency training as part of team meetings.

Auditors: **Yvonne Robinson**

Andrew Clarke

Food Standards Agency

Local Authority Audit and Liaison Division

Action Plan for Taunton Deane Borough Council

Audit Date: 16-17 March 2010

TO ADDRESS (RECOMMENDATION INCLUDING STANDARD PARAGRAPH)	BY (DATE)	PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS	ACTION TAKEN TO DATE
<p>3.1.2 Ensure that future Food Service Plans are in line with the Service Planning Guidance in the Framework Agreement, including details of the inspection programme for the year and the staffing resources required to provide the food law enforcement service compared with the staffing resources available to the Authority. [The Standard – 3.1]</p>	<p>30/06/10</p>	<p>Improvements to the Environmental Health Service Plan to include the following elements as recommended by the findings of the audit:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Service Plan is to include a table showing the number of inspections for the forthcoming year, the resources available to complete the inspection programme and individual Officer inspections allocation 2. The number of food premises will be included in the Service Plan. 3. The Service Plan will contain detail of the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy as approved by Members 4. The Service Plan will include the Council's policy with regard to the investigation of food poisoning. 5. The Service Plan will include the Council's policy for dealing with food alerts and compliance with the Food law Code of Practice. 6. The Service Plan will contain details of resources required for service delivery including levels of expenditure involved in providing the service, the number of posts required compared to the numbers involved in delivering the service and a staff development plan. 7. The Service Plan will include details of liaison arrangements with neighbouring local authorities to ensure a consistent approach to enforcement. <p>This will include the following details:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 19 - • Somerset Food, Safety and Health Liaison 	<p>The Service Plans for the Council must be completed and agreed by June 2010. Environmental Health are on target to complete this work within the corporate deadline</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group • Somerset Food, Safety and Health Liaison sub-groups • Formal consultation for Building Control, Planning and Licensing applications • Health Protection Agency • Other liaisons such as LACORS; CIEH; LBRO as appropriate <p>8. Approval for the Service Plan will be sought from the Executive Councillor for Environmental Health.</p>	
<p>3.1.10 Develop a system for the review of internal policies and procedures at regular intervals and whenever there are changes to legislation or centrally issued guidance. [The Standard – 4.1]</p>	<p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>31/10/10</p>	<p>1. A full list of policies and procedures will be included as an agenda item for Team meetings. Team meetings have been arranged for year 2010/11 and occur every six weeks.</p> <p>2. Any procedures that have expired or are shortly to expire will be allocated for review by the author of the procedure. Any procedures that require updating due to changes in legislation, guidance or practice will be reviewed by the author.</p> <p>3. Any procedure where the original author is no longer in post and requires review will be allocated an Officer.</p> <p>4. Policies and procedure highlighted by the audit as requiring attention will be allocated an officer or updated by the author. These include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorisation Policy • Complaints • Sampling • Prosecution • Notice • Internal Monitoring 	<p>1. Policy and procedure review table now included as an agenda item for Team meetings. The list was updated to include all procedures on 13 May 2010.</p> <p>2. At team meetings</p> <p>3. At the time of team meeting.</p> <p>4. Any procedures for updating will be allocated to Officers at the next team meeting.</p>

	31/07/10	<p>2. Specific actions on the premises highlighted to be carried out at the next inspection to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New approval document will be issued at the next inspection.• Newly approved establishments will have specific information captured at the next inspection.	<p>2. Next inspection due for two premises highlighted, planned in June and July 2010.</p>
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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:

- Environmental Health Service Plan 2009/2010
- Member Information Report on the E. Coli 0157 Outbreak in Wales
- Environmental Health Service Delivery Report, December 2009
- Food Interventions Policy
- Food Interventions Policy Officer Guidance
- Officer Authorisation Policy
- Food Officer Authorisation Policy
- Food Complaint Investigation Policy
- Food Premises Hygiene Complaint Investigation Policy
- Taunton Deane Food Safety Sampling Policy
- Food Sampling Procedure/appendices
- Somerset Authorities' Environmental Health Enforcement Policy and associated enforcement procedures
- Procedure for Monitoring the Quality of Regulatory Activity, and associated records
- Inter- Authority and external audit reports.

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

- General food premises inspection records
- Approved establishment files
- Food complaint records
- Formal enforcement records
- Internal monitoring records

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

- Audit Liaison Officer
- Senior Environmental Health Officer

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

(4) 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 specific regard to LA checks on FBO compliance with HACCP based food management systems.

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.
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 geographic area and situated within a County Council whose responsibilities include food hygiene enforcement.
E. coli	<i>Escherichia coli</i> microorganism, the presence of which is used as an indicator of faecal contamination of food or water. <i>E. coli</i> 0157:H7 is a serious food borne pathogen.
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 standards	The legal requirements covering the quality, composition, labelling, presentation and advertising of food, and materials in contact with food.
Framework Agreement	<p>The Framework Agreement consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Law Enforcement Standard • Service Planning Guidance • Monitoring Scheme • Audit Scheme <p>The Standard and the Service Planning Guidance set out the Agency's expectations on the planning and delivery of food law enforcement.</p> <p>The Monitoring Scheme requires local authorities to submit quarterly returns to the Agency on their food enforcement activities i.e. numbers of inspections, samples and prosecutions.</p> <p>Under the Audit Scheme the Food Standards Agency will be conducting audits of the food law enforcement services of local authorities against the criteria set out in the Standard.</p>
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 enforcement.

HACCP		Hazard Analysis 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.
OCD returns		Returns on local food law enforcement activities required to be made to the European Union under the Official Control of Foodstuffs Directive.
Regulators' Code	Compliance	Statutory Code to promote efficient and effective approaches to regulatory inspection and enforcement which improve regulatory outcomes without imposing unnecessary burdens on businesses.
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.
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 (TSO)	Officer	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.