

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

**Watford Borough Council
12 -14 May 2015**



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report records the results of an audit at Watford 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 publicly available on the Agency's website at:

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

Hard copies are available from the Food Standards Agency's Operations Assurance 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 Watford 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 as the Local Authority had not been previously audited.

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 Watford Council's arrangements for food premises database management, food premises interventions and internal monitoring, with regard to food hygiene law enforcement. 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.
- 1.6 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 offices at Community and Customer Services, Wiggshall Depot, Wiggshall Road, Watford, WD18 0FB, on 12- 14 May 2014.

Background

- 1.7 Watford Borough Council is situated in the South West of Hertfordshire in the east of England. The population is estimated to be approaching 94,000.
- 1.8 The Council has since 2002 been led by a Directly Elected Mayor. The Head of Paid Services for the Authority was the Managing Director supported by the Council Leadership Team which was accountable for officer decisions and performance. The team also oversaw performance management of the Council, including tracking major projects and the corporate work programme.
- 1.9 The Leadership Team included the Managing Director and seven Heads of Services including the Head of Community and Customer Services whose responsibilities included the Environmental Health and Licensing Section which delivered the food service.
- 1.10 The Authority reported the profile of food businesses at 31 March 2014 as follows:

Type of Food Premises	Number
Primary Producers	1
Manufacturers/Packers	13
Importers/Exporters	0
Distributors/Transporters	10
Retailers	203
Restaurant/Caterers	592
Total Number of Food Premises	819

2.0 Executive Summary

2.1 Watford Borough Council was selected for audit as the Local Authority had not been previously audited.

2.2 The Authority was found to be delivering a wide range of food law enforcement activities in accordance with the statutory obligations placed on the Authority as a competent food authority to protect consumers and business. The Authority required some improvements to fully meet the requirements of the Framework Agreement and the Food Law Code of Practice (FLCoP).

2.3 **Strength:**

The Authority was found to be delivering a very high level of the planned programme of inspections/interventions required by the Food Law Code of Practice.

2.4 **Areas for improvement:**

Food premises interventions: Officer's did not always record a sufficient level of detail of interventions carried out to demonstrate they had carried out a full assessment of compliance with relevant legislation.

Documented Policies and Procedures: The Authority needed to both review and introduce a limited number of procedures including an overall document control procedure, and procedures for database accuracy, internal monitoring and the authorisation of officers in regard to the assessment of officer competency.

Authorisation of Officers: The legislation contained in officer authorisations needed review to ensure it was complete and up to date.

3.0 Audit Findings

3.1 Organisation and Management

Strategic Framework, Policy and Service Planning

- 3.1.1 The Authority had developed a documented Food Law Enforcement Plan for 2015- 2017 which had been approved by elected members in March 2015. The plan highlighted key achievements and challenges in recent years.
- 3.1.2 The plan set out the vision of the Environmental Health and Licensing Section “to improve the health, quality, safety and economic prosperity of our town through a high performing efficient team delivering excellent outcome and customer focused services” and its links to the objectives in the Corporate plan as follows.
- Making Watford a better place to live
 - To provide the strategic lead for Watford’s sustainable economic growth
 - Promoting an active, cohesive and well informed town
 - Operating the council efficiently and effectively
- 3.1.3 The Plan included an assessment of the numbers of professional staff required to deliver the food hygiene law enforcement activities and identified a potential shortfall of 0.12 staff. However the Plan also stated that any shortfall in resources may be made up by the use of external contracts. A specific section of the Plan was devoted to the use of contractors and specified the conditions under which contractors may be employed.
- 3.1.4 The Service Plan was well structured and broadly followed the Service Planning Guidance in the Framework Agreement.

Documented Policies and Procedures

- 3.1.5 The Authority had developed a range of documented procedures/work instructions for its food law enforcement service however it did not have in place an overall control procedure for the management and review of procedures.
- 3.1.6 Procedures were stored on computer and all staff including those at remote locations had ready access.

Recommendation

3.1.7 The Authority should:

Set up, maintain and implement a control system for all documentation relating to its enforcement activities. [The Standard – 4.1, 4.2]

Officer Authorisations

- 3.1.8 The Authority had developed a documented procedure for the authorisation of officers which primarily focused on commencement of enforcement activities for newly appointed officers.
- 3.1.9 The Authority needed to review how it assessed the competency of officers on an ongoing basis taking into consideration the revised FLCoP. The use of a competency matrix linked to the formal performance review system was discussed as potential approach that may be adopted. It was also unclear how the competence of the lead officer was assessed and monitored.
- 3.1.10 Qualifications and training records for a number of officers were examined and these demonstrated that officers were receiving the minimum 10 hours relevant training per annum based on the principles of continuing professional development. This included specialist training for officers.
- 3.1.11 Checks on the legislation contained within authorisations found that the Authority contained insufficient legislative references. The Authority needed to review the authorisation of officers to ensure they are appropriately authorised under The Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011 and the Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009.

Recommendations

3.1.12 The Authority should:

- (i) Review the procedure for the authorisation of officers to ensure it includes an ongoing assessment of competency of all officers including the Lead Officer. [The Standard - 5.1]
- (ii) Review the authorisation of officers to ensure they are appropriately authorised under specific legislation. [The Standard – 5.1]

3.2 Food Premises Database

- 3.2.1 The Authority was operating a database capable of providing monitoring returns to the Agency but the software system required updating to allow LAEMS data to be submitted to the Agency. Auditors were concerned about the arrangement for support of the database system but were assured that the Authority had just entered into a contract for the provision of a higher level of support for the system.
- 3.2.2 The Authority had developed a range of guidance to ensure data was correctly and accurately entered and also used information and intelligence provided by Licensing, Environmental Crime and Town Enforcement Officers. The LA needed to review, formalise and document its procedures for ensuring data accuracy.

Recommendation

3.2.3 The Authority should:

Set up, maintain and implement an overall documented procedure to ensure that the food premises database is accurate, reliable and up to date. [The Standard – 11.2]

3.3 Food Premises Interventions

- 3.3.1 The Authority had developed a documented procedure for food hygiene inspections. The procedure provided for the allocation of inspections, the process of inspection, post inspection action follow up visits and monitoring arrangements.
- 3.3.2 Audit checks confirmed that the Authority had implemented a risk based approach to its interventions programme and database reports provided during the audit gave the number of overdue interventions at the 31 of March 2015 as 7 E rated premises.
- 3.3.3 The Authority had also developed projects such as the Butchers Project which started in 2013 and aimed to help to improve compliance in regard to cross contamination, food safety management systems, traceability, training and the disposal of animal by-product waste
- 3.3.4 The food hygiene inspection procedure provided that in certain circumstances new businesses would be offered an advisory visit ahead of an unannounced full inspection. Auditors advised the Authority that this approach would be taken back to the Agency for further discussion.
- 3.3.5 Five food premises files were assessed and auditors found some interventions had not always carried out at the frequency required by the FLCoP. Inspection findings were recorded using an appropriate inspection aide-memoire but there was variable and at times insufficient level of detail recorded to support officer's assessment of business compliance with relevant hygiene legislation.
- 3.3.6 Reports were provided to the food business operator (FBO) following each intervention and these were generally in accordance with Annex 4 of the FLCoP but in some cases information was not always recorded. Auditors noted examples of comprehensive letters to businesses following inspections advising them of any legal contraventions and timescales for compliance as well as offering useful advice. Auditors discussed one premise where more significant issues had been identified following an inspection which had not been revisited in accordance with the Services revisit policy.
- 3.3.7 The Authority had developed a documented procedure for the approval of establishments under product specific regulations.
- 3.3.8 File records were checked for three approved establishment including one dairy establishment and a meat preparations establishment which had relocated and required approval.
- 3.3.9 Files were found to be well structured and contained details of the business activities as required by Annex 10 of the Food Law Practice Guidance.

- 3.3.10 The Authority had developed suitable specific inspection aides memoire for approved establishments. However prompts provided in the aides memoire had not always been used and therefore the Authority was not able to clearly demonstrate that businesses had been inspected fully against all relevant hygiene legislation on every occasion.
- 3.3.11 One approved establishment had missing inspection records and the Authority could not clearly demonstrate the assessment of business compliance against relevant product specific legislation to support the decision to grant full approval. A more generic inspection aide memoire had also been used at the next intervention following approval. It was noted that all Approved Premises procedures had been reviewed subsequent to this inspection.
- 3.3.12 More detailed process and inspection information recording was required on appropriate inspection aide memoires to allow officers to demonstrate that businesses were complying with the requirements and conditions of their approval.
- 3.3.13 Auditors discussed the need to consider the recommendations highlighted in Enforcement letter ENF/E/14/011 and review the dairy sector specific aide memoire to ensure relevant prompts were provided for officers to gain assurance the FBO was compliant with the appropriate official controls when carrying out the next planned intervention at the approved dairy establishment.

Recommendations

3.3.14 The Authority should:

- (i) Carry out interventions/inspections at a frequency which is not less than that determined under the intervention rating scheme set out in the Food Law Code of Practice. [The Standard – 7.1]
- (ii) Assess and fully record the compliance of establishments and systems to legally prescribed standards and ensure that appropriate and timely follow up action is taken where non-compliance is found in accordance with the Authority's enforcement policy. [The Standard – 7.2& 7.3]

Verification Visit to a Food Premises

- 3.3.15 As part of the audit a reality check visit was carried out at a local café with the officer that carried out the last inspection. The officer had a good and effective working relationship with the FBO and the officer was able to demonstrate detailed knowledge of food safety legislation and food safety management systems. The officer had identified at the last inspection some non-compliance with food hygiene legislation. This prompted follow up in a timely fashion. As a result of the officers intervention the FBO had now generally addressed the food safety hazards that had been brought to their attention.

3.4 Enforcement

- 3.4.1 The Authority had developed a documented Environmental Health and Licensing Service Enforcement Policy which was dated 2014. The policy had been developed in accordance with centrally issued guidance with an appropriate reference to the Regulators' Compliance Code.
- 3.4.2 The Authority had also developed a range of documented food law enforcement procedures including hygiene improvement notices, emergency prohibition notices, seizure and detention of food, voluntary surrender, and voluntary closures.
- 3.4.3 Officers had access to site resources manuals for seizure and detention of food and prohibition procedures. The manuals contained key resources to support officers in carrying out relevant enforcement activities including information, equipment list, guidance, legislation, and model documentation.

Good Practice – Resources Manual

The Authority had developed resources manuals for the seizure and detention of food and prohibition procedures which contained key resources to support officers in carrying out relevant enforcement activities.

- 3.4.4 The Authority had not undertaken any food seizures, detentions, voluntary surrenders, simple cautions or prosecutions in the two years prior to the audit.
- 3.4.5 File record checks were carried out in regard to food hygiene improvement notices. Actions were found to be appropriate for the circumstances and were generally exercised in line with the requirements of the FLCoP. However in two cases there was no written confirmation of compliance with the notice.

- 3.4.6. The Authority has also developed a useful checklist for the service of hygiene improvement notices. Checks on three voluntary closures of premises found that in one case there had been no confirmation of voluntary closure of the premises by the FBO and the officer.

Recommendation

3.4.7 The Authority should:

Ensure that follow up actions are carried out in accordance with the Authority's Enforcement Policy, procedures, Food Law Code of Practice and official guidance.
[The Standard – 15.2 & 15.4]

3.5 Internal Monitoring, Third Party or Peer Review

Internal Monitoring

- 3.5.1 The Authority had developed a documented internal monitoring procedure which detailed monitoring arrangements in regard to inspection, case paper checks, inter authority auditing and quality records. However the procedure required full implementation in regard to case paper checks and inter authority auditing. Auditors discussed the need for case paper checks to be progressed across a range of food law enforcement activities on a risk based approach
- 3.5.2 Individual monitoring of officers work was undertaken through four to six weekly one-to-one meetings. The Environmental Health Manager also carried out accompanied inspections with officers which were fully documented, signed by the officer and manager and detailed strengths and areas of development.
- 3.5.3 Quantitative monitoring of inspections was carried out through an inspections spreadsheet which monitored progress of all officers.

Recommendation

3.5.4 The Authority should:

Develop and fully implement the documented internal monitoring procedures in accordance with Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 (Official Feed and Food Controls), the Food Law Code of Practice and centrally issued guidance. [The Standard – 19.1]

Food and Food Premises Complaints

- 3.5.5 The Authority had developed a documented food complaints policy and procedure. This included a helpful flow chart providing advice to the investigating officer on steps to be observed during investigations.
- 3.5.6 Audit checks on six file records of food and food premises complaint investigations found that appropriate investigations and action had been carried out. Officers had responded expediently to the type of complaint and carried out initial visits in good time. There was good evidence to demonstrate that a thorough investigation had been completed and the complainant informed of the outcome.

Food Inspection and Sampling

- 3.5.7 The Authority had developed a sampling policy and procedure. File checks were carried out on environmental samples that had been obtained from a multi-site food premises on two separate visits. This was part of a wider sampling programme undertaken on behalf of Public Health England.
- 3.5.8 Samples and appropriate follow up action had been had been undertaken including informing the FBO of the results of sampling and carrying out further investigations and sampling.

Records

- 3.5.9 Most Authority records were maintained electronically and these were generally easily retrievable.

Third Party or Peer Review

- 3.5.10 The Authority had not recently participated in third party or peer review exercises but was committed to a regional group FHRS inter authority audit which was scheduled to take place later in August.

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ANNEX A Action Plan for Watford Borough Council

Audit date: 12-14 May 2015

TO ADDRESS (RECOMMENDATION INCLUDING STANDARD PARAGRAPH)	BY (DATE)	PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS	ACTION TAKEN TO DATE
3.1.7 Set up, maintain and implement a control system for all documentation relating to its enforcement activities. [The Standard – 4.1, 4.2]	April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A master control procedure will be set up that details all main and supplementary food procedures, with version numbers, owners and review dates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single list of procedures has been compiled.
3.1.12 (i) Review the procedure for the authorisation of officers to ensure it includes an ongoing assessment of competency of all officers including the Lead Officer. [The Standard - 5.1]	April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An authorisation matrix will be created that details which officers are authorised to undertake specific food law enforcement activities, and how officers can achieve the varying levels of authorisation. • A system will be introduced to assess the competence and of the lead officer. • Both will be done having regard to the 2015 changes to the Code of Practice and will feed into the council's personal development review scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft authorisation matrix has been created • The Authority will be participating in a peer review assessment of Lead Officer Competency project with colleagues across Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire

<p>3.1.12 (ii) Review the authorisation of officers to ensure they are appropriately authorised under specific legislation. [The Standard – 5.1]</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All officers have now been authorised under the Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011 and the Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009. • It has been confirmed that the Lead Officer is authorised under the Food and Environmental Protection Act 1985 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed
<p>3.2.3 Set up, maintain and implement an overall documented procedure to ensure that the food premises database is accurate, reliable and up to date. [The Standard – 11.2]</p>	<p>April 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A procedure formalising the current informal controls that we have in place will be produced. This will include details of the reports that are currently run on the database and which are supplemented by Food Hygiene Rating Scheme Reports. • It will also include the intelligence led ways that we keep the database up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of reports that are run has been created
<p>3.3.14 (i) Carry out interventions/inspections at a frequency which is not less than that determined under the intervention rating scheme set out in the Food Law Code of Practice. [The Standard – 7.1]</p>	<p>April 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against the inspection plan continues to be reviewed with officers at least 6 weekly at individual case reviews. • Progress will also be reviewed as part of the overall review against the service plan. • The peer review will also include a check on compliance with the inspection frequency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft peer review template has been developed that includes an assessment of whether the intervention was carried out in accordance with the frequency laid out in the Code of Practice

<p>3.3.14 (ii) Assess the compliance of establishments and systems in their area to the legally prescribed standards and ensure that appropriate and timely follow up action is taken where non-compliance is found in accordance with the Authority's enforcement policy. [The Standard – 7.2& 7.3]</p>	<p>April 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A peer review system will be put in to ensure that inspection records are sufficiently detailed and that follow up action is taken in a timely manner and correctly recorded on the database. This is in addition to the internal monitoring controls already in place. • Officers will be reminded of the need to make effective notes of all interventions • All interventions at Approved Premises will be undertaken in accordance with our documented Approved Premises inspection procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft peer review template has been developed that includes an assessment of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) The enforcement action taken.</i> <i>(ii) The notes that were taken at the time</i> <i>(iii) The details that have been recorded on the food premises database</i> <i>(iv) Correspondence with the Food Business Operator</i> <i>(v) The nature and timing of any follow up action</i> • Documented procedures for dealing with Approved Premises were in place prior to the audit, and all full inspections subsequent to them being implemented use the appropriate proforma
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<p>3.4.7 Ensure that follow up actions are carried out in accordance with the Authority's Enforcement Policy, procedures, Food Law Code of Practice and official guidance. [The Standard – 15.2 & 15.4]</p>	<p>October 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A peer review system will be put in to ensure that where needed follow up actions are inspection records are sufficiently detailed and that follow up action is taken in a timely manner and correctly recorded on the database. This is in addition to the internal monitoring controls already in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft peer review template has been developed that includes an assessment of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) The enforcement action taken.</i> <i>(ii) The notes that were taken at the time</i> <i>(iii) The details that have been recorded on the food premises database</i> <i>(iv) Correspondence with the Food Business Operator</i> <i>(v) The nature and timing of any follow up action</i> • An assessment of any revisits that are needed is now included in all officer case reviews
<p>3.5.4 Develop and fully implement the documented internal monitoring procedures in accordance with Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 (Official Feed and Food Controls), the Food Law Code of Practice and centrally issued guidance. [The Standard – 19.1]</p>	<p>October 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The internal monitoring regime currently in place will be extended to include case paper checks. • The authority will participate in the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Food Hygiene Rating Scheme peer review audit scheduled for 2015-16. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft peer review template that included internal monitoring has been put together. • An officer has been designated to take forward the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Food Hygiene Rating Scheme peer review audit

ANNEX 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 relevant LA policies, procedures and linked documents were examined before and during the audit:

- Food Service Plan
- Officer authorisation, training and qualification records
- Enforcement Policy
- A range of food hygiene law enforcement procedures
- Minutes of meetings

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

- General food premises inspection records
- Training records
- Approved establishment files
- Food and food premises complaint records
- Food sample 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

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

- 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 an officer to a local food business. The purpose of the visit was to verify the outcome of the last inspection carried out by the LA and to assess the extent to which enforcement activities and decisions met the requirements of relevant legislation, the FLCoP and official

guidance, having particular regard to LA checks on FBO compliance with HACCP based food safety management systems.

ANNEX 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.
External Temporary Storage Facility (ETSF)	A warehouse (formerly known as an enhanced remote transit shed or ERTS) 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	<p>The Framework Agreement consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Feed 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 and feed law enforcement.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Full Time Equivalent	A figure which represents that part of an individual

(FTE)	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.