



Exeter City Council

Environmental Health Commercial Services

Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement 2008/2009

Robert Norley
Head of Environmental Health Services

Drawn up in accordance with the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement, issued September 2000

Issued by: Nick Mann, Principal Environmental Health Officer

Issue date: April 2008



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Services Aims and Objectives
 - 2.1 Aims and Objectives
 - 2.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans
- 3.0 Background
 - 3.1 Profile of Exeter City Council
 - 3.2 Organisational Structure
 - 3.3 Committee Structure
- 4.0 The Food Safety Services
 - 4.1 Scope of the Food Safety Service
 - 4.2 Remit of the Food Safety Service
 - 4.3 Food Business Profile
 - 4.4 Access to the Commercial Section
 - 4.5 Enforcement Policy
- 5.0 Service Delivery
 - 5.1 Food Premises Inspections
 - 5.2 Food Complaints
 - 5.3 Home Authority
 - 5.4 Advice to Business
 - 5.5 Food Inspection and Sampling
 - 5.6 Control and Investigation of Food Poisoning Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease
 - 5.7 Food Safety Incidents
 - 5.8 Liaison with Other Organisations
 - 5.9 Food Safety Promotion
 - 5.10 Financial Matters
 - 5.11 Staffing Allocation
 - 5.12 Self Development Plan
 - 5.13 Quality Assessment
 - 5.14 Review
 - 5.15 Areas of Improvement
- 6.0 Conclusion
- 7.0 Glossary of Terms
- 8.0 Appendices

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Introduction**

1.1.1 The Council recognises the important role it plays promoting Food Safety and securing the safety of food consumed in the City. This plan has the key aim of demonstrating how the Council will fulfil its statutory obligations in accordance with the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement. It includes:

- the Council's aim and objectives;
- information about the food enforcement services provided by the Council;
- details of the Council's performance management systems;
- information on the performance of the Commercial Team.

1.1.2 Recommendations for the Food Service Delivery Plan for the forthcoming year is contained in Appendix 1.

1.1.3 A review of the performance of the Commercial Team's activities against the relevant performance indicators is contained in Appendix 2.

SECTION 2 – SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 **Aims and Objectives**

2.1.1 The Council's strategic objectives are reproduced in appendix 13.0. The strategic objectives are contained within the corporate plan which is available by visiting www.exeter.gov.uk/corporateplan.

2.1.2 In respect of Food Safety, the objectives of the Council are to:

- undertake appropriate food safety interventions at food premises, for which the Council is the enforcing authority, and institute informal or formal action in accordance with the Services Enforcement Policy, LACORS and Food Standards Agency guidance and advice and current good practice. Businesses will be targeted, focusing resources on those businesses presenting a high risk to food safety with a view to securing an annual improvement in the compliance of food safety.
- investigate complaints about food and food premises and at the conclusion of investigations institute informal or legal action as appropriate;
- facilitate the provision of food safety training services to local businesses to assist them to meet legislative requirements;
- investigate cases of food-borne disease and advise upon appropriate precautionary and control measures;
- issue licences, approvals and monitor compliance with relevant conditions;
- sample and arrange for microbiological testing of high-risk food products;
- develop "Home Authority" partnerships, where relevant, with local businesses;
- provide advice and assistance to businesses to help them comply with food safety legislation and maintain a high standard of food hygiene;
- work in partnership with related organisation to promote the well being of persons living, working or visiting the City.

2.2. **Links to Corporate Objectives and other local and national strategies and plans**

2.2.1 The food safety role the Council exercise links to several of the Exeter Vision themes (and related strategies) and in particular:

- A prosperous city
- A cultural and fun place to be
- A learning city
- A city of strong communities

- A city where people are healthy and active
- A city where the environment is cared for
- A safe city
- Excellence in public services

2.2.2 The service embraces the principles of excellence in public services and Better Regulation and will look to make the most effective use of available resources to achieve maximum gain.

2.2.3 The service implements the requirements of the Food Law (Code of Practice) England which adopts the recommendations of the Hampton Report. The service will actively promote and evaluate the use of effective food safety interventions to facilitate compliance with food law.

2.2.4 The service recognises the importance of food and its influence on the wider determinants of health. The service and will seek to work in partnership and play an active role to reduce the inequalities in health in the local population and thereby contribute to current deliver mechanisms such as Local Area Agreements.

2.2.5 The service recognises the potential of its activities to contribute to many of the National Performance Indicators.

SECTION 3 – BACKGROUND

3.1 **Profile of Exeter City Council**

- 3.1.1 The geographical enforcement area is relatively confined in local authority terms covering an area of 4,774 hectares and supporting a resident population of 111,264 persons. However, being the county market town and regional administrative, cultural and educational centre, the City has a significant impact on the hinterland of East and Mid Devon.
- 3.1.2 No significant food manufacturing premises are located within the City. The bulk of the food premises are presently concerned with the storage, catering or retail sale of food. There is an increasing variety of ethnic eating places and fast food takeaway outlets and the food pattern is dynamic.
- 3.1.3 The City's status as a medical, university, and educational centre means that there are several large institutional catering premises located within the boundary.
- 3.1.4 The few Product Specific Premises are small scale operations by modern day standards.
- 3.1.5 Exeter is no longer a port authority.
- 3.1.6 The service embraces the core aims of the FSA's food safety issues (including Imported Food Controls), nutrition & diet issues and more recently sustainability.

3.2 **Organisational Structure**

- 3.2.1 The Commercial Section within Environmental Health Services is responsible for delivering the Food Service Plan. In addition to this the Commercial Section provides:
- the Health and Safety Enforcement function;
 - the Council's internal Health and Safety service;
 - the licensing duties in relation to Licensing Act 2003.
- 3.2.2 Environmental Health Services operates under the Directorate of Community and Environment.
- 3.2.3 The Head of Environmental Health Services has various delegations to act on behalf of the Council. All non-delegated matters are reported to the appropriate committee.
- 3.2.4 The officer structure in respect of the food service is detailed in Appendix 3. Overall co-ordination of the service is the responsibility of the Environmental Health Manager (Commercial) with lead officer responsibility given to the Principal Environmental Health Officer (Food Safety).
- 3.2.5 The Council's solicitor has delegated authority to instigate legal proceedings following instructions from the Head of Environmental Health Services.
- 3.2.6 Specialist analytical and microbiological services are provide by external agencies such as the Food, Water and Environment Laboratory Services and Somerset Scientific Services.

3.3 **Committee Structure**

- 3.3.1 A flow diagram showing the committee structure for the council is shown in Appendix 4.

SECTION 4 – THE FOOD SAFETY SERVICE

4.1 **Scope of the Food Safety Service**

4.1.1 The Commercial Team is responsible for undertaking the following activities associated with the Food Safety Service:

- programmed food hygiene interventions and revisits;
- approval of food businesses
- monitoring the database
- food sampling
- investigation of food complaints;
- investigation of food poisonings and infectious disease outbreak control;
- responding to Food Standards Agency Food Hazard Warnings/Alerts;
- provision of export food certificates;
- inspection of food;
- facilitation of advisory and training services for businesses;
- promotion of food safety.

4.1.2 While engaged in the above activities the Commercial Team uses a variety of means to ensure that individuals and organisations meet their responsibilities including education, negotiation, advice, guidance, warning letters, formal notices and prosecution. The council believes in fair regulation. Overall the team seeks to work in collaboration with businesses while avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy in the way its works.

4.2. **Remit of the Food Service**

4.2.1 **Interventions**

The Council will:

- carry out a range of official and other food control as set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (England) and other centrally issued guidance;
- inspect/audit and approve, relevant premises in accordance with the relevant legislation, Code of Practice and centrally issue guidance;
- liaise with the 'Home Authority' of any company whose premises have been inspected and offences identified which are, or appear to be, associated with the company's centrally defined policies and procedures;

- assess the compliance of premises and systems to the legally prescribed standards having due regard to any relevant Industry Guides to Good Hygiene Practice and other relevant centrally issued guidance;
- take appropriate action on any non-compliance found, in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy;
- set up and monitor documented intervention procedures and record legible data and information following interventions, in a retrievable way.

4.2.2 Complaints

The Council will:

- implement the documented policy and procedure in relation to food complaints;
- liaise with the Home and/or originating authorities regarding matters associated with a company's centrally defined policies/procedures;
- take appropriate action on complaints received in accordance with the Council's policy/procedure.

4.2.3 Home Authority Principle

Where the Council act as Home Authority we will:

- provide advice on legal compliance;
- have regard to any information or advice received as a result of any liaison;
- notify any authorities the Council have initiated liaison with of the outcome.

4.2.4 Advice to Business

The Council shall continue to work with businesses to help them comply with the law, for example the Council will:

- promote training courses and seminars;
- provide advice during visits and official on other food controls;
- respond promptly to queries;
- maintain a dialogue with business through the Regulatory forum and other business forums;
- provide business written information and advisory leaflets where appropriate.

4.2.5 Food Premises Database

The Council will:

- maintain the database of food premises in the City and take steps to ensure that the information is accurate and up to date.

4.2.6 Food Inspection and Sampling

The Council will:

- inspect food in accordance with relevant legislation to ensure it meets the legally prescribed standards;
- take appropriate action in cases of non-compliance in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy;
- maintain an annual sampling programme taking account of current guidance;
- adhere to the Council's procedures for procurement or purchase etc of samples;
- the Council has appointed Somerset Scientific Services and the Food, Water and Environment Laboratory as the Council's Public Analyst and Food Examiner respectively.

4.2.7 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

The Council will:

- have regard to the Health Protection Agency Plans and recommendations in relation to the investigation and control of outbreaks of food related disease.

4.2.8 Food Safety Incidents

The Council will:

- respond to food hazard warnings in accordance with the documented procedure;
- maintain a computer system capable of receiving food hazard warnings;
- document our response to and the outcome of each food hazard warning;
- notify the Food Standards Agency of any serious localised incident or wider food safety problems.

4.2.9 Enforcement

The Council will:

- carry out food law enforcement in line with the Council's Enforcement Policy and the Codes of Practice (England) and Food Law Practice Guidance (England);
- document any departure from the criteria set out in the Policy.

4.2.10 Records and visit reports

The Council will:

- maintain up to date accurate records in a retrievable form for each food premises in the City for at least 5 years.

4.2.11 Complaints about the Service

The Council's adopted complaints procedure is available to the public and food businesses.

4.2.12 Liaison with Other Organisations

Liaison with neighbouring authorities aimed at facilitating consistent enforcement will be exercised through the Devon Chief Environmental Health Officers Food Sub-Group having regard to advice issued by LACORS. Regular contact will be maintained with Devon County Council Trading Standards Department and periodic meetings will be held with the Regulatory Forum, local business forums & interested groups to provide advice and promote good practice;

Where appropriate partnerships will be formed with educational establishments, Primary Care Trust and other bodies to promote food safety.

4.2.13 Internal Monitoring

Internal monitoring procedures to verify conformance with this Service Plan will be established and exercised.

4.2.14 Audit

The Council will:

- participate in third party and peer review processes against this Service Plan and associated procedures.

4.2.15 Food Safety Promotion

The Council will:

- actively promote food safety issues through award schemes, campaigns, dissemination of information and support to schools and colleges and targeted groups and where resources allow and liaise with organisations to promote food safety.

4.2.16 Other Services

The Commercial Section have responsibility for undertaking a parallel role in respect of Health and Safety at Work in commercial premises:

General (non-food related) complaint work will initially be undertaken by the Environmental Protection Section (EPS) but specific problems related to food premises will be the responsibility of Commercial Section officers, in accordance with Departmental Guidance Note 2/99. Pest control treatment may be undertaken by officers from the EPS in liaison with Commercial Section staff, but only when it will not comprise future enforcement action.

The service seeks to work in partnership with relevant agencies to promote food safety & food related matters in the wider context of public health.

4.2.17 Use of Contractors

It is the policy of the Council to engage the services of outside contractors to assist in programmed food hygiene interventions, subject to:

- there being a shortfall in the staffing resource and/or a backlog of interventions which cannot be completed by officers;
- agency contractors meeting the requirements specified in the Code of Practice (England) and the relevant Councils procedure; and
- the cost of the work being met within existing budgets.

4.3 **Food Business Profile**

4.3.1 The current profile of the food premises in the City as per Food Standards Agency classification is illustrated in Appendix 5.0.

4.3.2 Following an inspection/audit, the premises is then scored and categorised (i.e. A to E) in respect of the risk to food safety in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (England). The categories dictate the interval between inspections. For example category A, i.e. high-risk premises, are inspected every 6 months, category D premises are inspected every 2 years. The service currently operates an alternative enforcement strategy for category E premises, which includes forwarding such businesses a self-inspection questionnaire, and inviting businesses to attend food safety workshops.

4.3.3 The current profile of food premises in terms of risk category are shown in Appendix 5.1.

4.3.4 There are approximately 60 food premises in the City where business owners do not speak English as their first language. This can impact on the ability to successfully inspect premises and to effectively promote food safety. Food businesses in the city make great use of migrant food handlers. The profile of which is dynamic and not subject to robust data.

4.4 **Access to the Commercial Section**

4.4.1 The Commercial Section is based in the Civic Centre, Paris Street. Service users may contact officers on site or by leaving a message in the following ways:

- in person at the Customer Service Centre in Paris Street.
- by telephone, 01392 265193 between 8.30am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday;
- whilst there is no formal out of hours service staff can be contacted in the event of an emergency through the Council's Control Room on 01392 420215 by means of a pager/telephone service;
- by email: ce-admin@exeter.gov.uk or exeter@exeter.gov.uk
- by fax: 01392 265852

4.5 **Enforcement Policy**

4.5.1 The Enforcement Policy includes the principles contained in the Compliance Code which the Council is committed to incorporating into its regulatory functions. The Enforcement Policy will be subject to periodic review at which time amendments will

be made to specifically reflect the requirements of the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement and other relevant and appropriate guidance.

4.5.2 The key elements of the Enforcement Policy are detailed below:

- a belief that enforcement must be firm but fair;
- the need for proportionality in the application of the law;
- showing transparency about how the service operates;
- a need for targeting of enforcement action;
- a need to deliver consistency of approach;
- the need to use prosecution as a deterrent as well as a punishment;
- the need to balance enforcement and education in the way the service works.

4.5.3 Environmental Health Services holds the Chartermark Award which demonstrates exceptionally good service to its customers.

SECTION 5: SERVICE DELIVERY

5.1 **Food Premises Inspections**

5.1.1 A programme of official and other food controls form the core activity of the Food Enforcement function. The range of interventions are specified in the Food Law Code of Practice (England). In addition to the programme of interventions, other visits may be made to food premises following complaints from the public or requests from businesses for information and guidance.

5.1.2 Whilst the primary responsibility for identifying food hazards and controlling risks rests with food businesses, food hygiene interventions will be undertaken to:-

- establish whether food is being produced hygienically;
- establish whether food is, or will be having regard to further processing, safe to eat;
- to identify foreseeable incidences of food poisoning or injury as a consequence of consumption of food.

5.1.3 With the foregoing in mind, the main objectives of the interventions programme will be to:-

- determine the scope of the business activity and the relevant food safety legislation;
- thoroughly and systematically gather and record information;
- identify of potential hazards and risks to public health;
- assess the effectiveness of process controls and HACCP based systems;
- identify specific contraventions of food safety legislation;
- consider appropriate enforcement action (proportionate to risk), to secure compliance with food safety legal requirements;
- produce advice and information and recommend good practice where appropriate;
- promote continued improvements in food hygiene standards to meet national / local performance indicators and the relevant Food Standards Agency strategy.

5.1.4 A comparison of the total number of food hygiene inspections targeted against those actually carried out is shown in Appendix 6. This is broken down by risk category in Appendix 6.1.

- 5.1.5 In order to achieve the inspection programme not less than 3.25 (FTE) qualified food inspectors will be required. This figure takes no account of the burden of any extra targeted inspection activity arising from complaints or Food Alerts for example.
- 5.1.6 All officers undertaking inspections, investigating complaints, giving advice and taking samples shall meet the qualifications and experience requirements in the Food Law Code of Practice (England).
- 5.17 It is not envisaged that arrangements will need to be made to ensure the Council have access to specialist expertise for the inspection of any specialised processes located in the city.

5.2 **Food Complaints**

5.2.1 Food complaints received and investigated by the service fall into one of the following broad categories:

- food contamination;
- complaints about food businesses (poor hygiene, pests, lack of food handler training etc);
- food hazard alerts.

5.2.2 The established procedure for dealing with food complaints sets out the action to be taken regarding investigation. (See Procedure/Practice Note No 2.2). Our investigation will be guided by the detailed considerations laid down in the LACORS publication "Dealing with Food Complaints".

5.2.3 The number of food complaints/service requests received annually has been increasing in recent years, perhaps as the public become more aware and are better educated in food safety issues together with the introduction of methods to capture such information.

5.2.4 The number of complaints received in the previous years, together with an estimated number for the forthcoming year, is shown in Appendix 7. It is estimated that 0.2 FTE qualified inspectors will be required to deal with food complaints.

5.3 **Home Authority**

5.3.1 It is recognised that the co-ordination of advice and enforcement is essential to ensure uniformity of treatment and consistency in dealing with food businesses which have more than one branch or unit situated in different food authority areas. The Council will therefore be guided by the LACORS Home Authority Principle.

5.3.2 The Council will take responsibility for giving advice to these food businesses with the main base in our area on matters relating to food hygiene and food safety policy and legislation. The Home Authority lead officer role is currently exercised by the Principal Environmental Health Officer (Food Safety).

5.3.3 Where the Council are unable to adhere to this principle the Council will discuss our concerns with LACORS and, should the matter not be resolved, with the Foods Standards Agency.

5.3.4 The list of business premises for whom the Council currently act as Home Authority are shown in Appendix 10.0. Current measures are sufficient to ensure that the

Council meet and advise these businesses and can respond to enforcing authority enquiries.

5.3.5 It is anticipated that 0.1 FTE will be required to fulfil our Home Authority commitments.

5.4 **Advice to Business**

5.4.1 The full range of CIEH food courses will be promoted to enable local businesses to fulfil their training requirements, including training provision for non English speaking food handlers.

5.4.2 Inspectors provide advice during routine interventions and respond to queries from the public and food businesses.

5.4.3 Advice on topics of general and current food safety interest will be placed on the Council web site and information leaflets will be produced and made available as deemed necessary.

5.4.4 A biannual food safety newsletter is produced and distributed to approx 700 businesses in the City.

5.4.5 The Council is an active participant in the Regulatory Forum and will use this and other forums as a means to disseminate relevant food safety information to local businesses and help assess their needs and obstacles to compliance.

5.4.6 The service will actively seek participation in or look to co-ordinate appropriate forums to promote food safety & disseminate information.

5.4.7 It is estimated that 0.1 FTE qualified food inspectors will be necessary to provide information and advice to food businesses.

5.5 **Food Inspection and Sampling**

5.5.1 The Council will ensure that food is inspected in accordance with relevant legislation, The Food Law Code of Practice (England) and the Practice Guidance (England) and centrally issued guidance and ensure that food meets prescribed standards.

5.5.2 The food sampling programme for the forthcoming year commencing 1 April 2008 is attached as Appendix 9.

5.5.3 Routine sampling will be undertaken by the Environmental Health Officers supported by the Environmental Health Technician (Environment Policy and Monitoring) (EHT(EPM)) under the direction of the PEHO (Food Safety). Activity reports will be submitted on a periodic basis. A procedure has been set up and implemented in respect of taking samples and the arrangements made for Analysis and Examination. (See Policy/Procedure Note 2.6).

5.5.4 A summary of the results from the sampling programme for the current and previous years is attached in Appendix 10.

5.6 **Control and Investigation of Food Poisoning Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease**

5.6.1 The Commercial Team's objectives, in respect of the control of food related infectious diseases are to:

- contain the spread of any outbreak;
- identify the focus of infection;
- identify the causative organism/chemical;
- trace carriers and cases;
- trace the source of infection;
- determine the causal factors;
- recommend practices to prevent recurrence of disease; and
- determine whether criminal offences have been committed.

5.6.2 The incident of notified cases of food-related disease in the City over recent years is detailed in Appendix 11.

5.6.3 Investigations into outbreaks of food related poisonings are carried out in consultation with & under the direction of the Health Protection Agency.

5.6.4 The Environmental Health Officer Post No CE07136 has been designated as lead officer in respect of infectious disease control and it is anticipated that adequate resources exist within the full complement of the Commercial Section to deal with this service demand.

5.6.5 It is estimated that 0.1 FTE qualified food inspectors will be required to investigate outbreaks and food related infectious diseases.

5.7 **Food Safety Incidents**

5.7.1 The Council has and will maintain a computer system capable of receiving food alerts and will implement the documented procedure for responding to food alerts and food safety incidents received from the Food Standards Agency, in accordance with the relevant Food Law Code of Practice (England). The current informal out of hours contact arrangements will be used.

5.7.2 Documented responses to the outcome of appropriate food alert will be in accordance with the adopted procedure. (See Policy/Procedure Note No 2.19).

5.7.3 In the event of any serious localised incident or a wider food safety problem, the PEHO (Food Safety) will notify the Food Standards Agency.

5.7.4 It is considered that adequate resources exists within the full complement of the Commercial Section/Administration Section to deal with this demand.

5.7.5 It is anticipated that 0.1 FTE will be required to deal with food hazard alerts.

5.8 **Liaison with Other Organisations**

5.8.1 The Council is committed to ensuring the enforcement approach it takes is consistent with other authorities. Regular dialogue on food enforcement matters and food related issues takes place with:

- Home Authority business partners
- Trading Standards
- Devon Chief Environmental Health Officer Food Sub-Group
- Regulatory Forum
- Infection Control Committee
- Exeter and Heart of Devon Hoteliers & other appropriate business forums
- CIEH

5.8.2 In delivering the food service, the Council recognises the increasing importance of partnership working. Examples of this include:

- consultation with business, via questionnaire surveys following programmed interventions;
- participation in third party audits, joint sampling initiatives etc with the Devon CEHO's Food sub-group;
- participation in Food Link National Awareness Campaign;
- organising the Exeter Curry Chef Competition which has been hosted by Exeter College;
- identify funding opportunities such as the franchise agreement with educational providers to provide cost effective hygiene training, or access specific funding to run targeted initiatives
- in partnership with Exeter College, development of food hygiene training combined with English literacy skills to provide food safety training for the non English speaking community;
- in partnership with the Devon Primary Care Trust providing focused training sessions on nutrition / 5-a-day;
- In partnership with the Exeter College and Devon County Youth Service, and the Community Safety Partnership to provide a cooking skills course incorporating food safety and nutrition and health guidance targeting individuals identified by the Police, Youth Offending Team, Link Education, social services and other organisations with responsibility to disadvantaged teenagers;
- the development of specific chef forums to promote food safety;
- linking with an academic institution to research good practice within the catering industry.

5.9 **Food Safety Promotion**

5.9.1 The service utilises many methods to promote food safety and increasingly is led by the developing body of research. For example the service will be implementing a "Scores on the Doors" scheme to drive improvements in food law compliance.

5.9.2 Numerous promotional activities also occur during the course of a typical year usually in response to need/requests from the different communities in Exeter, for example:

- presentations to schools (including junior life skills event), interested groups, professional bodies, (e.g. Infection Control Study Days, Chef Focus Group, Taste of the West Members, Early Years providers);
- circulation of advisory leaflets or guidance notes in response to topical issues or changes in legislation;
- production of a biannual newsletter entitled 'Food Matters';
- participation in the annual Exeter Food and Drink Festival.

5.10 **Food Safety Training**

5.10.1 The service has established a robust cost effective training service for Exeter and the surrounding area. The service has been successful in receiving external funding initiatives and will apply for funding schemes as and when they become available.

5.10.2 The number of learners who have attended the courses provided by the section are represented in Appendix 12 of the Enforcement Plan.

5.10.3 The service is currently achieving an average of 97% success rate for its training courses.

5.10.4 The service regularly provides training in other languages to meet the needs of the business community, with tailored courses being delivered to 51 (whose first language is not English) candidates, in 7 different languages.

5.11 **Financial Matters**

5.11.1 No detailed figures are currently available to determine the overall level of expenditure involved in providing the food safety service as this has historically been part of the wider shared activities of the Commercial Section (e.g. Health and Safety and Licensing Enforcement). Likewise it is not possible to accurately determine the trend of growth in real terms of the food safety function. The food safety function can occupy the significant portion of time of the Section, at the expense of the other services.

5.11.2 The information and training element is also shared amongst the enforcement disciplines although it has its own budget and cost centre and aims to produce significant income. Efforts are being made to introduce mechanisms to identify the expenditure more accurately including non-fixed costs such as staffing, travel and subsistence, equipment including investment in IT, and the financial arrangements for any legal action necessary as part of the enforcement function.

5.11.3 The separate budgets for sampling and analysis are currently £570 and £260 respectively for the year.

Budget Allocation Figures for 2007/8 – Food Safety Function

FUNCTION				
	Salary (+)	Equipment	Travel	Overheads
<u>Health Education F18</u>	20000	5000	1200	24000

Proportion allocated to Food Safety function (50%)	9000	2000	360	1200
--	------	------	-----	------

NB Based on 50% time allocation – 30% Training and Information and 20% Inspection/Enforcement devoted to Food Safety function.

ENFORCEMENT					
	Salary (+)	Equipment	Training	Travel	Overheads
<u>Commercial F20</u>	220940	1560	3800	8130	62000
Proportion allocated to Food Safety Function (40%)	88000	800		3252	31500
Analysis (max)		260			
Purchase of Samples		570			
Energy & Monitoring Sampling Technician	4000				

NB:

- Based on 40% allocation to Food Safety. Analyst fees up to a maximum £260 (may also be used for water/health and safety samples if required).
- Overheads and travel split – 50%
- A further allocation for Health and Safety is made in the Health and Safety budget (F19) and this sum can be used if required to finance/support food training.

The specific training budgets are held with the Environmental Health Division – Commercial Section – and it is available to Commercial Section staff only.

5.12 Staffing Allocation

5.12.1 There are currently 2.5 FTE staff directly working on food, enforcement and related matters with a significant and increasing support role by general administration assistants.

Title	% of time	Qualification	Role
EH Manager		EHORB Diploma in Environmental Health	Management
PEHO	50	EHORB Diploma in Environmental Health	Lead Officer (Food Safety)
EHO	<50		Inspector
EHO	<50		Inspector
EHO	<50		Inspector
EHO (part time)	<50		Inspector
EHO (part time)	<50		Inspector
EHT	<50		EHT
EHT	<20%	Informal Sampling only	EHT (Sampling)

5.13 **Staff Development Plan**

5.13.1 The service will ensure that Commercial Section Officers are appropriately qualified and receive regular training to maintain and improve their level of competency. All officers will have access to the equivalent of at least 10 hours food safety update training which will normally be identified at performance appraisal and target setting. All Environmental Health Officers will be afforded the facility of continuing professional development.

5.13.2 The training structure comprises:-

- the employment of enforcement officers capable of food law enforcement;
- evidence of formal qualification (sight of original qualification certificates prior to commencement of employment);
- in-house competency-based training;
- identification of training needs during annual performance appraisal to meet current targets to assist and improve upon performance against current job requirements.

5.13.3 The following additional steps are taken to ensure staff development:-

- internal training sessions will continue to be held. It is anticipated that this will deliver approximately 4 hours CPD in food related topics per year;
- briefing notes on topics of current interest will continue to be regularly circulated to bring details of new legislation and technological change in the field of food safety enforcement to the attention of officers;
- those staff who have not attained Chartered Status with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health will be encouraged to achieve this by successfully completing their Assessment of Professional Development;
- programmes of instruction will be devised to accommodate the needs of new and existing staff and ensure the required level of competency.

5.14 **Quality Assessment**

5.14.1 Internal monitoring procedures have been set up to verify the service operates in conformance with relevant legislation, the Food Law Codes of Practice (England) and our procedures.

5.14.2 The Environmental Health Service holds the Chartermark Award for quality.

5.14.3 A system of Food Safety Inspection Quality Monitoring has been established. (See Policy/Procedure Note No 1.2).

5.14.4 The Council will participate in appropriate inter-authority peer review exercises against the Food Standards Agency standard.

5.14.5 The Council will continue to monitor and report on Customer Satisfaction with the Food Enforcement Service.

5.15 **Review**

5.15.1 Quarterly reports on progress in implementing both this Service Plan and the Commercial Section Business Plan, will be made by the EH Manager to the Head of Environmental Health Services and the Executive Member with the Environment and Leisure Portfolio.

5.15.2 An annual review against the Service Plan will be made by the Scrutiny Committee (Community).

5.15.3 The annual review report will contain information on performance against the Service Plan and Performance Indicators. It will highlight any variances from the plan, reasons for these, and the likely impact that these may have.

5.15.4 The Scrutiny Committee (Community) will support and Executive with approve the Food Service Delivery Plan for the following year. Improvements to the service identified as a result of the review, quality assessment, or benchmarking work will be incorporated in the new Plan.

5.15.5 Information on our targets and progress towards meeting these will be published and publicised as part of the Council's Performance Plan. Individual food businesses will continue to receive our results against the national performance indicators.

5.16 **Areas of Improvement**

5.16.1 A number of actions have been identified in the Commercial Section's Food Service Delivery Plan 2008/2009 (Appendix 1), which will be carried out during the forthcoming year. Achievement of these improvements will be monitored by the PEHO and EH Manager and where there are significant performance issues, reports will be made to the appropriate Committee.

SECTION 6: CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement 2008/2009 shows that the Council has organised its food safety function in such a manner that it is capable of achieving a comprehensive food safety service capable of meeting the corporate aims of the authority, and the expectations of the Food Standards Agency and legislation.

SECTION 7 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

GLOSSARY	
EH Manager	Environmental Health Manager (Commercial)
PEHO	Principal Environmental Health Officer
EHO	Environmental Health Officer
CEHO	Chief Environmental Health Officer
EHT	Environmental Health Technician
EHORB	Environmental Health Officers Registration Board
LACORS	Local Authority Co-ordinating Body on Regulatory Services
FSA	Food Standards Agency
FW&E	Food, Water and Environment Laboratory
SWWS	South West Water Services plc
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
PCT	Primary Care Trust
HPA	Health Protection Agency