



PLACE DIRECTORATE

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2022/2023

**Drawn up in accordance with the
Food Standard Agency's Framework Agreement**

FOREWORD

Under the statutory Food Law Code of Practice, City of York Council (the Council) is required to produce an annual service plan that covers their various food functions.

The Public Protection team carry out many of the Council's regulatory functions particularly those relating to Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing and is responsible for the all the Council's duties in relation to food and feed. For clarity, this includes (i) food hygiene matters i.e. that food is safe to eat, (ii) food standards matters i.e. that food is what it says it is and (iii) similar provisions in relation to animal feed.

This service plan sets out our aims and objectives for 2022/2023 and also looks at what demands are placed on the team and what resources are available to meet those demands. It also reviews our performance over the last year. To this end, any variance between the 2021/2022 planned and actual performance is highlighted as well as any service improvements.

This plan illustrates the effective use of existing resources to target the highest risk businesses, while maintaining a balanced enforcement mix.

The current system of ensuring food hygiene and standards has its roots in the Food Law Code of Practice introduced in 1990. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is currently reviewing the way this activity is delivered, and there may be changes to the role Local Authorities play in the coming years.

1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Aims and objectives

The Council strives to achieve the following in its various food related functions:-

- To approve and register food/feed premises as prescribed by government;
- To operate a comprehensive regime of interventions, for example inspections, sampling, advice and other approaches, including formal enforcement action, to ensure that food and animal feed is safe and is what it says it is;
- To 'score' food hygiene businesses in accordance with the FSA's food hygiene rating system;
- To provide support, assistance, training and advice to local businesses, thereby enabling them to produce and market products that comply with legal requirements and best practice. In the process of this support, help businesses recover from the coronavirus pandemic, survive the cost of living crisis and those which want to grow, grow. There may be a charge for these services;
- To act as a Primary Authority and Originating Authority, and deal with enquiries referred to us by other agencies;
- To investigate complaints about the labelling, composition, safety and fitness of food, feeding stuffs and the operation of food premises;
- To take prompt and effective action in response to food hazard warnings and other threats to food safety in York;
- To investigate cases of communicable disease notified to the Authority;
- To share intelligence obtained in the course of our work with the police and other law enforcement agencies to help wider social

issues such as tackling modern slavery and disrupting organised crime gangs.

- Through all of the above, ensure the health and well-being of residents and visitors to the city.

1.2 Links to corporate objectives and plans.

The Council's Plan for 2019-2023 includes the following eight key priorities:

- **Good Health and Wellbeing:** Every resident enjoys the best possible health and wellbeing throughout their life.
- **Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy:** High-skilled and better-paid jobs in sustainable businesses, providing opportunities for all York's people in an inclusive economy.
- **Getting around sustainably:** People benefit from the wide range of transport options available to them, including cycling and walking, with the city's roads, footpaths and cycle network prioritised for improvement.
- **A Better Start for Children and Young People:** Families and carers are supported, so that every child and young person has the opportunity to develop, learn and achieve their aspirations.
- **A Greener and Cleaner City:** York's environment is protected and enhanced through investment in the council's frontline services, on the path to sustainable living.
- **Creating homes and World-class infrastructure:** The right housing is affordable and available alongside good quality infrastructure to support communities and business.
- **Safe Communities and culture for all:** People are safe from harm in strong, resilient and supported communities, enhanced by an appealing and inclusive cultural offer.

- **An open and effective Council:** We work as an open, transparent and accountable organisation, in partnership with key stakeholders, to deliver on residents priorities and achieve the Council Plan outcomes for our city.

1.3 Public Protection managers review the demands across the whole service annually and refresh a Public Protection service plan which describes all the activities we will undertake during the course of the year to support the priorities listed in the Council plan. This includes delivering this specific food service plan to ensure that food businesses are meeting their legal obligations.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of the council

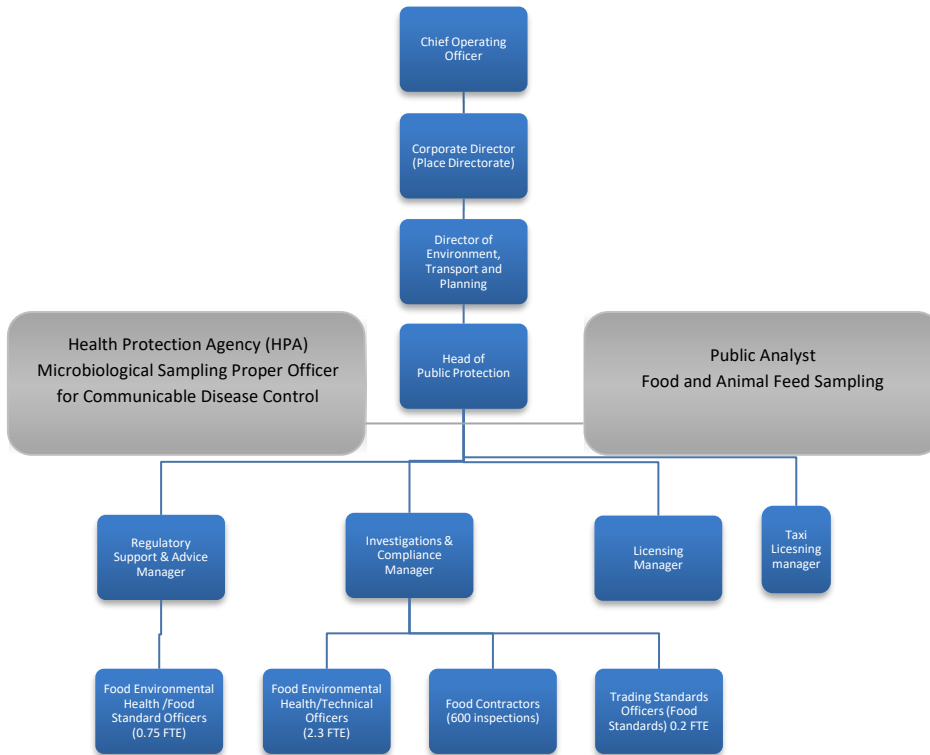
City of York Council is a unitary authority, with a population of 202,800 (according to the 2021 census) and an area of 27,250 hectares. The majority of the electorate are located in the urban city area, with the remainder resident in the outlying towns and villages.

The area is predominantly urban, covering the historic city with the associated tourism, hospitality and catering activities. Studies show that food and drink is the largest area of spend for tourists.

2.2 Organisational structure

The following diagram shows how those responsible for managing and delivering food and animal feed activity fit into the Council's overall structure and also the political structure.

Officer Structure



Political Structure



Other specialist support services include:-

- Public Analyst services for food are provided under contract by 'The Public Analyst Service Ltd'. Feed samples are analysed under the North Yorkshire County Council contract for animal health and feed.
- Microbiological food examination is carried out under service level agreement with the Health Protection Agency (HPA) laboratory service.

2.3 Scope of the food and feed service

The Public Protection team has responsibility for all of the council's food hygiene, food standards and animal feed activities (including 'primary production' activities).

The structure charts above, show that in relation to food matters the team comprises of both environmental health and trading standards professionals, in addition to technical support staff. Some officers have dual qualifications and are therefore able to deal with both food hygiene and food standards matters. We have additional support from specialist Food Safety contractors to deliver routine inspections and North Yorkshire County Council delivers our animal feed activity under a contract for services.

On a day to day basis, officers are involved in the following specific activities:

- A programme of interventions focusing on food and feeding stuffs. This primarily consists of inspections conducted for food safety matters conducted in accordance with a risk assessment (as described in the Food Code of Practice).
- 'Scoring businesses' after an intervention in accordance with the Food Hygiene Ratings Scheme. We also deal with appeals and re-score visits (a charge is made for businesses wishing to be re-scored on a 'cost recovery' basis).
- Investigation of complaints from consumers, and reacting to intelligence from other sources.
- Investigation of food poisonings/infectious disease notifications.
- Promotion and education/advice for businesses and the public. For example, we provide pre-food hygiene rating inspections for businesses, on a cost recovery basis, to help raise standards locally.
- Sampling of food and animal feed.
- Sharing intelligence obtained in the course of our work with the police and other enforcement agencies to help tackle wider social issues including modern slavery and organised criminal activity.
- Signposting growing businesses to the help available through the Local Growth Hubs.

Our Environmental Health Offices also have responsibility for Health and Safety duties in certain business premises (those outside of the scope of the Health and Safety Executive) and also occasionally assist in other areas of Public Protection work including support with trading standards prosecutions – in particular disclosure of unused material.

2.4 Demands on the food team

The Council’s area contains a mix of manufacturing, retail and catering premises; hospitality and catering are the dominant sectors. There is a large international confectionery manufacturer, a district hospital, various large academic institutions and a racecourse. We have a relatively small number of farms.

Table 1 - Breakdown of food premises by FSA category (from Civica records).

FSA Category	Number on1 April 2022
FSA Primary Producer	10
Manufacturer & Packer	44
Importer/Exporter	2
Distributor/Transporter	20
Retailers Other	83
Restaurants/Cafe/Canteen	514
Supermarket/Hypermarket	62
Small Retailer	256
Hotel/Guesthouse	125
Pub/Club	220
Takeaway	208
Caring Establishment	130
School/College	93
Mobile Food Unit	54
Restaurant/Caterers - Other	241
Total	2062

The number of food premises fluctuates year on year, but is typically around the 2,000 mark. As can be seen, the profile of food premises in York is heavily biased towards restaurants and caterers, which is a reflection of the city’s status as a major tourist destination.

As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and current economic situation we have already seen an increased turnover of business ownership in the restaurant and catering food sector, and anticipate that this will continue in the year ahead. This 'business churn' places a strain on the team's resources due to requirement to undertake inspections of these new premises.

Under the product specific Regulation (EC) 853/2004, there are four premises that are currently 'approved' by the food team, these being two egg packing centres, one dairy processing plant and one fish processing plant, the latter being approved during 2021/2022.

The team works in accordance with the principles of the Primary Authority scheme, which is promoted by the Office of Product Safety and Standards (part of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy or 'BEIS' as it is commonly referred to). We have developed Primary Authority Partnerships with a number of local businesses.

The service is primarily delivered from council offices at the Eco Depot, Hazel Court, York, but the majority of officers now work at home for around three to four days a week.

The council's hours of operation for the general public are 08:30 -17:00, Monday to Friday. Given the number of restaurants and takeaways, a lot of our interventions, such as inspections, are conducted outside of these hours.

2.5 Regulatory Policy

The Public Protection team follow an enforcement policy which ensures we operate in accordance with the Regulators' code. The formal enforcement action taken under the enforcement policy is reviewed by Members annually.

2.6 Covid-19 Impact

During 2021/2022 the Covid-19 pandemic continued to have a huge impact on the way the world operates. The impact of lockdowns on food businesses has been significant with many businesses being unable to operate during lockdown or having to adapt and operate in new ways.

The Covid-19 lockdown restrictions have also had a huge impact on the work of Public Protection and, like other Local Authorities, prevented us from being able to carry out a large number of food inspections, except for where an imminent food safety matter was identified. Guidance issued by the Food Standards Agency during 2021/2022 and for the year ahead, under the 'Covid Recovery Plan', is being used to help prioritise our service to deal with the greatest risks to public health and safety.

As a result of the reduced number of inspections conducted during the Covid pandemic there is a backlog of some 300 inspections , representing approximately 1/3 of all food hygiene inspections which were due in the 2020/2021 financial year. We are however making good progress against the Food Standards Agency's 'Recovery Plan' (see below) and in that respect are ahead of where we are expected to be.

Whilst Public Protection were unable to carry out significant numbers of inspections during lockdown, advice was given to many businesses on compliance with new Covid-19 regulations and guidance.

3. SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Interventions at Food and Feed Establishments

The term 'intervention' is used to cover the broad range of controls that we use when dealing with food businesses to verify compliance with food law. Interventions are classified as either 'official controls' or as 'other interventions'. The following definitions are taken from the Code of Practice:

Interventions that are 'official controls' include:

- inspections;
- monitoring;
- surveillance;
- verification;
- audit; and
- sampling - where analysis/examination is required these are to be carried out by an Official Laboratory.

Other interventions, i.e. those which *do not* constitute official controls include:

- education, advice and coaching (including where businesses pay for this advice); and
- information and intelligence gathering (this can include sampling for information gathering purposes, obtaining relevant information during visits for other reasons, internet research, telephone surveys, and self-assessment questionnaires).

All food premises are 'risk rated' to reflect the products they supply and the systems they have in place to ensure compliance. Almost all food businesses must receive an intervention within a defined period of time. In some cases the intervention must be an 'official control' (and in some cases only a certain kind of 'official control' e.g. an inspection). In other cases, generally lower risk businesses, this can be an 'other intervention' which is not an 'official control'.

Examples of highest risk premises are places serving particularly vulnerable people, and/or places serving high risk foods with short 'use by' dates and a poor record of compliance. Examples of lowest risk premises (providing they have good systems in place and there is good

confidence in management) are retailers selling pre-packed foods, pubs/clubs only serving drinks and bar snacks, sweet/chocolate shops and cake manufacturers amongst others.

3.2 Food Hygiene Interventions

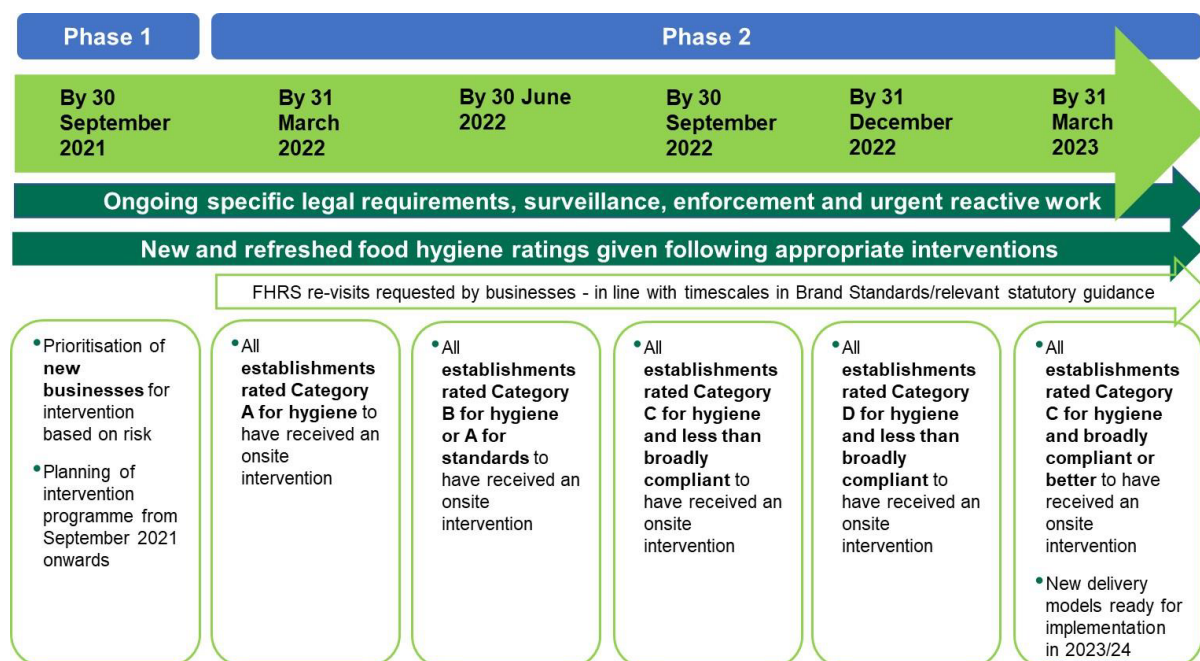
Review of last year's food hygiene intervention performance (2021/2022)

As noted, during 2021/2022 Public Protection were unable to carry out all the food hygiene interventions, normally required by the Food Law Code of Practice, due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, businesses being closed, and re-directing resources to deal with Covid enforcement work.

As a result of these issues, which were not unique to York, the FSA issued guidance to local authorities, known as the Covid Recovery Plan, advising they prioritise higher risk food businesses for interventions. The aim of this being to reduce risk of transmission of the virus, reduce the burden on local authority resources being used to combat Coronavirus, but ensure that food hygiene standards were still being met by higher risk or poorer performing food businesses.

The Covid recovery plan, updated in June 2021, required all local authorities to carry out relevant food hygiene interventions as per Figure 1 below, as a minimum.

Figure 1: Outline of the FSA Recovery Plan



However, Public Protection committed to inspect the following in 2021-22

- all ‘A’ rated food businesses,
- all ‘B’ rated food businesses,
- all ‘C’ rated food businesses,
- all non-broadly compliant ‘D’ rated food businesses,
- all new food businesses

This being above the minimum FSA intervention standard required.

Table 3.1 below shows a summary of the performance against the Covid Recovery Plan for 2021/2022 and also our own targets as set out above.

Table 3.1 Food hygiene interventions from 01/04/21 to 31/03/22

High risk ← → Low risk

Premises intervention rating	A	B	C	D	E	Unrated	New	Total
No. of interventions normally required	16	42	261	724	201	58	144	1,446
No. of interventions required by FSA recovery plan	16	42	10	0	0	58	144	270
No. of interventions required by Public Protection Plan	16	42	261	35	0	58	144	553
No. of interventions postponed by recovery plan	0	0	0	653	184	0	0	837
No. of interventions achieved	13	38	171	35	3	40	108	408
No. of premises closed so unable to inspect	3	4	38	36	14	18	16	126
No. of premises where no intervention was achieved	0	0	52*	1*	0	0	20**	73

* Unable to inspect but businesses rated with a food hygiene rating score of 5.

**** Businesses registered late in 2021/2022 year and moved into 2022/2023 inspection programme**

As can be seen – apart from the new businesses who registered late in the year - Public Protection were able to undertake all the interventions required by the FSA's recovery plan, as well as carrying out interventions over and above the requirements of that recovery plan.

Of the above inspections carried out 86% of the businesses received a broadly compliant food hygiene rating (Scores of 3, 4 or 5), and 41% received a food hygiene rating score of 5.

Across all businesses in York, including those not inspected this past year, 97% are rated as broadly compliant and 75% have received a food hygiene rating of 5.

Proposed Food Hygiene Intervention Plan (2022/2023)

In March 2022, The Food Standards Agency issued an update to their Covid-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan detailing local authority expectations on the recovery of the food intervention plan until the end of March 2023.

The emphasis of the plan continues to prioritise higher risk premises for interventions where higher risks arise from businesses who are inherently high risk due to the nature of their products or services they provide, or from businesses who are high risk due to their poor food hygiene practices and procedures.

The FSA Covid recovery plan requires that all local authorities carry out relevant food hygiene interventions as a minimum between April 2022 and March 2023 at

- all 'A' rated food businesses,
- all 'B' rated food businesses,
- all non-broadly compliant 'C' rated food businesses,
- all non-broadly compliant 'D' rated food businesses, and
- all newly registered food businesses

To comply with the FSA's minimum intervention recovery plan Public Protection proposes on inspecting

- all 'A' rated food premises,

Food Service Plan – 2022/2023

- all 'B' rated food premises'
- all 'C' rated food premises,
- all non-broadly complaint 'D' rated food premises (food hygiene rating of 0-2),
- all 'D' rated food premises with a food hygiene rating of 3 or 4
- all butcher premises, and
- all newly registered food businesses

As can be seen Public Protection are again going beyond the minimum requirements set out by the FSA.

Based on the above it is anticipated that the following interventions will be required this financial year, see table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Food hygiene interventions due: 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

High risk ←————→ Low risk

Premises intervention rating	A	B	C	D	E	Unrated*	Total
No. of premises officially requiring intervention (including all overdue interventions) under normal circumstances	15	60	215	791	315	93	1,489
No. of interventions Planned (compliant with FSA Recovery Plan)	15 (30)	60	215	282	0	93	665 (680)

* This is the number of unrated premises at the start of the year. There will be more premises during the year as new businesses open etc.

In addition where intelligence or complaints are received about a business, which is classed as a D' risk category premises with a food hygiene rating of 5, or a risk category 'E' premises, then public protection will consider carrying out an additional food intervention to ensure that food hygiene standards are maintained.

3.3 Food Standards Interventions

Review of last year's food standards intervention performance (2021/2022)

As per the food hygiene standards interventions, food standards interventions in 2021/2022 were also affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. Under the FSA's Covid recovery plan, updated in June 2021, all local authorities were required to carry out food standards interventions as detailed in Figure 1 previously shown above.

Under normal circumstances Public Protection would usually inspect premises falling within the High 'A' premises intervention rating category and take an 'intelligence led' approach to food standards for those premises falling within the medium, low or unrated premises intervention rating categories, rather than following the regime specifically set out in the Food Law Code of Practice.

However under the FSA's Covid Recovery Plan, Local Authorities were required to inspect all higher 'A' rated food standards businesses and identify any unrated or new food businesses which would be likely to be classed as 'A' rated businesses. Where any businesses were identified as being 'A' rated then the FSA require that they are inspection by the end of June '22.

During 2021/2022 Public Protection received additional funding from the FSA to carry out a telephone survey of the 1,100 previously unrated food businesses, with those interactions being classed as an interventions.

Table 3.3 below shows a summary of the performance against the Covid Recovery Plan for 2021/2022.

Table 3.3 Food standards interventions from 01/04/21 to 31/03/22

Premises intervention rating	High 'A' Risk	Medium 'B' Risk	Low 'C' Risk	Unrated	New	Total
No. of interventions required under FSA recovery plan	6	0	0	1,100	71	1,177
No. of interventions achieved	4	0	0	769	0	773
No. of premises closed	2	0	0	127	0	129
No. of interventions not achieved	0	0	0	204	71	275

As can be seen Public Protection managed to inspect all the existing 'A' rated food standards premises and survey 896 of the unrated food premises, of which 127 were found to be closed. We did not carry out any interventions with new businesses (although some key issues like advising on food allergens are addressed by Environmental Health Officers on the opening food hygiene inspection)

Table 3.4 below shows the results of risk categorisation of the unrated food premises contacted in the prioritisation survey. The results of which inform this year's food standards plan below.

Table 3.4 Telephone Survey Prioritisation Results

	High 'A' Risk	Medium 'B' Risk	Low 'C' Risk
Numbers of Premises	18	497	257

Proposed Food Standards Intervention Plan (2022/2023)

The FSA recovery plan continues to require that all local authorities carry out relevant food standards interventions at all 'A' category premises, and consider all new and unrated premises.

In relation to category 'B' and 'C' premises no interventions are required until 2023/2024, or when any new Food Standards delivery model is ready for implementation, unless intelligence or complaints are received about a business and indicates that there may be issues of concern. This is akin to the approach that we have been taking to Food Standards inspections for a number of years.

Based on the above it is anticipated that the following food standards interventions will be required this financial year (see table 3.5).

Table 3.5 Food standards interventions due: 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

Premises intervention rating	High 'A' Risk *	Medium 'B' Risk	Low 'C' Risk	Unrated	New	Total
No. of interventions required under FSA recovery plan	18	0	0	275	~ 100	393
No. of interventions Planned compliant with FSA Recovery Plan	18	0	0	275	~100	393

This will involve inspecting the three previously identified 'A' rated; and 18 premises identified in the prioritisation survey by end of June 2022. We are pleased to advise that these inspections have now been completed.

In addition by the end of September 2022 it is hoped that we will have completed the prioritisation of the remaining 275 unrated food premises and, where necessary, undertaken inspections of any additional premises likely to be classed as 'A' risk.

For new businesses registering during the 2022/2023 year, each business will be assessed using a prioritisation questionnaire or telephone survey, and any identified as being likely to fall within a high or 'A' rating will receive a formal inspection as required.

Where intelligence or complaints are received about a business which falls within the 'B' or 'C' risk categories, then public protection will consider carrying out an additional food standards interventions.

In addition to the above our Environmental Health Officers will continue to give advice in relation to food allergens during the course of their food hygiene visits.

3.4 Feeding stuffs/primary production interventions 2022/2023

City of York Council has a total of 192 registered feed premises, as required by Regulation 183/2005, which are involved in the use, manufacture or marketing of feed.

In 2021/2022 a total of 12 programmed animal feed interventions were due to be undertaken, with 11 interventions actually undertaken by North Yorkshire County Council, under the animal health and feed contract, on behalf of City of York Council.

In 2022/2023 a total of 9 programmed animal feed interventions are due to be undertaken, again to be undertaken on behalf of City of York Council by North Yorkshire County Council under the animal health and feed contract.

As well as proving their competence and ability to deliver the service in a customer focussed way, the supplier was asked to demonstrate the ways in which they could contribute towards the council commitment to becoming carbon neutral and help tackle some of the wider concerns around modern slavery and organised crime. Where appropriate we will incorporate primary production hygiene interventions to reduce the burden on farms.

3.5 Food and Feed Complaints

We investigate food and feeding stuffs complaints in accordance with procedures in our quality management system.

In 2021/2022 we received 79 complaints about the safety of food and 113 complaints about the hygiene of premises. We received a further 13 complaints about food standards. These figures are fairly consistent year-on-year, reflecting how busy the food sector is in York and the high awareness of food issues amongst our customers. We anticipate a similar number of complaints in the year ahead.

3.6 Food and feed sampling

The food safety team is primarily concerned with the microbiological safety of food, but also samples food to establish the nature and likely harm arising from foreign bodies and the like.

The sampling programme tends to focus on areas of past non-compliance, premises that are failing to meet minimum standards and emerging priorities such as cross contamination in connection with E.coli.

Each year Public Health England undertakes microbiological analysis of the samples we take, most of which are done without charge under a credits system. It is not known at this stage whether recent changes to Public Health England will affect this provision.

Our food standards samples look at the description, composition and labelling of food, to ensure that legal requirements are being met. Samples are normally targeted at areas where problems are regularly found, or where intelligence and/or complaints suggest there could be issues.

The team sample foods and feeding stuffs in accordance with national guidance. We participate in nationally co-ordinated sampling programmes, such as those organised by Public Health England, and also sample where local intelligence indicates a need (e.g. where poor food handling practices are observed).

We are currently recording our food standards and food safety samples on the United Kingdom Food Surveillance System.

Due to the Covid pandemic no samples were undertaken during 2021/2022, compared to 47 being undertaken in 2019/2020, the last year before the Covid pandemic.

3.7 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food related infectious disease

The team investigate all food poisoning notifications and outbreaks of food borne disease in accordance with procedures agreed with Public Health England and our local quality procedures.

In 2021/2022 the team received 73 formal notifications of infectious disease, with a similar number of notifications anticipated in the coming year.

3.8 Food/feeding stuffs safety incidents

We deal with all food alerts from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in accordance with the Food Code of Practice and our local quality management system. Notifications are received from the FSA by e-mail and appropriate action is taken in each case.

The reactive nature of these notifications makes it difficult to estimate the likely level of future activity. Although alerts can be issued by the FSA for information only, some require a formal response. A formal response might involve issuing a local press release or contacting multiple food businesses directly, which has resource implications.

3.9 Primary Authority Scheme

We are committed to following the principles of the Primary Authority scheme and have entered into Primary Authority agreements in relation to food with seven businesses.

3.10 Advice to businesses/customers

The team provide high levels of support and assistance to businesses operating or intending to operate in the City of York area.

We typically receive around 300 requests for business advice each year, but in 2021/2022 we actually received 410 requests, as well as numerous requests for advice and support in relation to Covid.

Advice is often requested by prospective businesses before they commence trading. We are seeing many new premises opening and new business proposals being considered. We anticipate dealing with a

much higher number of requests for advice in 2022/2023 as a result of the high levels of business churn being currently experienced.

We also receive a large number of requests for advice from businesses interested in improving their rating under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. We provide this service for a charge on a cost recovery basis using a Pre-Inspection Audit (PIA).

Last year 57 businesses took up this PIA service, this number being lower than in the years prior to the Covid pandemic, when typically around 70 or so PIAs were carried out each year.

Of the 57 businesses receiving a PIA last year, 45 were existing businesses and 12 were newly registered food businesses. For the existing businesses, 38% of the businesses saw their food hygiene rating score improve when they received their formal food hygiene inspection, 49% saw their food hygiene rating score remain the same (mainly for those with existing food hygiene rating scores of 4 and 5), and 6 businesses saw their score reduce.

For new businesses, 58% of the businesses who had a PIA received a food hygiene rating score of 5 at their formal food hygiene inspection, and 67% received a 'Broadly Compliant' food hygiene rating inspection score.

This demonstrates that these pre inspection advice visits do improve standards.

3.11 Liaison with other organisations

The team will ensure that it is operating in a manner that is consistent with both neighbouring and national local authorities and other agencies. Various methods will be used to facilitate this, including benchmarking, peer review and liaison with:-

North Yorkshire Food Liaison Group

Our regional food liaison group works under the wing of the North Yorkshire Chief Environmental Health Officers Group. All eight North Yorkshire local authorities are represented on both of these groups. Of particular relevance is the food safety quality management system (QMS) which the group maintains. Officers from the other authorities in the North Yorkshire region are of course preparing for Local Government re-organisation which will see their services amalgamated into one team

across the region. It is yet to be decided how this will impact on the North Yorkshire Chief Officers Group.

Yorkshire and the Humber Trading Standards Group – Food and Feed

This group is formed by the Yorkshire and Humber Trading Standards Executive Group and meets at least once a year to discuss food standards issues. They look at regional projects where intelligence indicates there are emerging issues, for example counterfeit alcohol or meat substitution.

Public Health England (PHE)

The PHE food laboratory, based at FERA near York, undertake microbiological analysis of food samples on our behalf. Regular meetings are held to promote coordination and good sampling practice across the region.

North Yorkshire District Control of Infection Committee

This is a multi-disciplinary group of public health consultants, consultant microbiologists, environmental health officers, infection control nurses, general practitioners and associated professions. It meets on a quarterly basis to discuss infection control issues and set policies in relation to their investigation and control.

North Yorkshire Police Disruption Panel

The panel exists to share intelligence and undertake activities to disrupt organised crime, including activities connected with food businesses. Where the team receives a food related complaint that does not fall within its enforcement remit or geographical enforcement area, it refers the person concerned to the correct body or forwards the item of work to the relevant authority without delay.

3.12 Promotional and project work

The team continues to raise consumer and business awareness through press releases, particularly following prosecutions.

4. RESOURCES

4.1 Financial allocation

The net Public Protection budget, for all environmental health, trading standards and licensing functions is £1.3m per annum.

4.2 Allocation of staff

As can be seen in the structure chart above, our food officers are shared across two teams i.e. 'Investigations and Compliance' which carries out the bulk of our interventions and enforcement, and 'Regulatory Support and Advice' which provides business advice. The resources are however shared between the two teams as demand requires it.

Full time officers spend approximately 1,200 hours per annum on front line related tasks. Of this time, the majority of the team spend approximately 50% of their time on food related issues i.e. 600 hrs per year per FTE. The technical officer spends ~100% of their time on food.

Therefore, we have 3,660 hours of officer time to deliver the food service, and will be broken down as follows.

Task	Time (hours)
Lead officer role – performance monitoring, service planning, NY food group	120
Intervention programme (in house staff only)	750
Enforcement work (e.g. investigations/prosecutions)	280
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme	60
Food/premises complaints, including business advice, alerts etc.	900
Infectious disease	120
Primary authority/income work	780
Project work	120
Management of food contractors	250
Sampling	150

Officer training	140
TOTAL TIME TO DELIVER SERVICE	3,660

In addition to the above resources there is a budget of £40,000 for contractor inspections which will purchase in the region of 600 inspections. Some of which may be used this year to supplement our increased food standards work as required by the FSA's Local Authority Covid Recovery Plan.

Animal Feed

Our animal feed/primary production inspections will be carried out on our behalf by competent officers at North Yorkshire County Council.

Management

The above figures do not include Management time, which will be undertaken within existing resources.

4.3 Staff development plan

The Food Law Code of Practice requires that staff achieve at least 20 hours of food related Continuing Professional Development (CPD) each year.

Staff development needs are identified on an ongoing basis, through the team's quality management system. We also hold annual Performance Development

Reviews with individual officers, where the training needs are considered. Identified training needs will be met by:-

- Training to achieve specific qualifications
- Attendance of technical seminars/courses
- In-house training on specific issues
- Cascade training by staff that have attended relevant courses
- Use of online training resources (e.g. FSA online content)

Training records show that officers achieve the required levels of CPD training required by the Food Law Code of Practice.

5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

5.1 Quality assessment and internal monitoring

The food team operates within the North Yorkshire Food Liaison Group's quality management system (QMS).

The QMS includes a rigorous system of controlled documents that state the minimum standards for our food enforcement activities. It includes internal monitoring within the authority and is further enforced by inter-authority auditing.

The system ensures the delivery of high quality enforcement activity across the City of York, which is consistent with the other North Yorkshire authorities and is in accordance with good practice.

5.2 External monitoring

The Council's activities are subject to periodic monitoring from the Food Standards Agency. The last monitoring visit took place in February 2022 in relation to Food Standards, whereby a plan of action as previously detailed was put in place. This plan was completed and signed off as complete in March 2022.

6. ENFORCEMENT

6.1 Formal action

The following table 6.1 summarises the level and types of formal enforcement action taken in 2021/2022.

Generally we believe that to be effective, the full range of enforcement options should be used, from informal letters offering advice, through to prosecutions where this course of action is considered appropriate.

Formal action was made more difficult in 2021/2022 due to the partial closure of the courts, due to Covid, and as a result the need for the courts to concentrate on Crown Prosecution Service cases.

Table 6.1 Summary of Public Protection Food safety/standards Enforcement 2021/2022

Type Of Action	Numbers Taken/ Issued 2021/2022
Voluntary Closures	2
Seizure of detention of foods	0
Emergency Prohibition Notice	0
Prohibition Notices	0
Simple Caution	0
Hygiene Improvement Notice	5
Remedial Action/Detention Notices	0
Prosecutions Concluded	0
Prosecutions Pending	3
Written Warnings	392

7. SUMMARY

7.1 Summary of performance – including key variations from the service plan.

We carried out a food hygiene intervention for the vast majority of all the premises due an intervention in 2021-2022, with those missed being as a result of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic since March 2020 and the premises being lower risk.

We have also continued to take firm enforcement action against the poorest performing businesses, where possible due to the pandemic, with 1 business prosecuted for food standards matters.

7.2 Customer Satisfaction

Public Protection regularly survey our business customers and members of the public, to ensure that we are providing a high quality, customer focused service.

In 2021/2022 our surveys found the following, as per table 7.1 below.

Table 7.1 Summary of Public Protection Satisfaction Survey Results 2021/2022

Directorate Measure	2021/2022 Result	Target
% of businesses reporting contact with officers was helpful	100%	95%
% of businesses reporting that they were treated fairly	98%	90%
% of business reporting that the visit was useful	98%	95%
% customers satisfied with the overall level of service provided	76%	85%

7.3 Areas of challenge of areas for improvement in 2022/2023

- Dealing with the backlog of missed food hygiene inspections should be manageable but there are challenges in dealing with the backlog of food standards unrated inspections as required by the Covid Recovery plan.
- Supporting business recovery from the pandemic and support through the cost of living crisis as well as advice as businesses re-open or new businesses start up. Advice will include signposting businesses to those offering grants and other forms of support to help businesses grow.
- Further improvements to intelligence gathering and sharing, particularly in relation to identifying victims of modern slavery and tackling organised crime.
- Undertake horizon scanning on food related issues.
- Improve our Proceeds of Crime capability – particularly amongst Environmental Health staff.
- Increased public interest and scrutiny of the food hygiene inspections.