

FOOD SERVICE PLAN

2019-2020



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2019-20

INTRODUCTION

The Service Plan relates to the year commencing 1st April 2019 and ending 31st March 2020.

It covers the service provision for the Food Safety, Food Standards and Feed functions of Flintshire County Council.

The purpose of this Plan is to provide:

- Information about the scope of the Service.
- Information about the services provided.
- Information about the means of Service provision.
- Information about performance of the Food Service against Performance Targets set out in the Plan as well as against national or locally defined Performance Indicators.
- Information relating to reviewing performance in order to address any variance from meeting the requirements of the Service Plan.

Service Plans are produced annually to allow for meaningful review and progression, in accordance not only with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency (FSA) “Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement” but also with the principles of the “Wales Programme for Improvement”. In respect to Feed, this function is delivered as part of the FSA Funded North Wales Regional Feed Enforcement Delivery Plan, with all inspection and sampling targets being reviewed and set annually by FSA Wales.

This Service Plan also forms part of the Authority’s commitment to delivering the aspirations of the Local Service Board to provide citizen centred services and to work in collaboration and co-operation.

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2019-20**

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1.0 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The aims of the Food Service are to:

1. Promote, through education and enforcement, the sale and/or production of food which is fit and without risk to health.
2. Prevent and control the spread of food borne illness through education and enforcement.

These will be achieved by:

- (a) Providing a complete and holistic food law enforcement service covering the areas of food hygiene and safety, food standards and animal feed in accordance with relevant food legislation and Codes of Practice, thereby fulfilling statutory obligations.
- (b) Providing a responsive service to demand driven elements such as food safety incidents, outbreaks of food related infectious disease, complaints and request for advice from both businesses and members of the public, in accordance with relevant statutory Codes of Practice
- (c) Assisting businesses to comply with all relevant legislation by using a balance of techniques and approaches in order to ensure the safety and well being of the Public and of the environment in line with the Public Protection Enforcement Policy 2010.
- (d) Maintaining an up-to-date database of all food establishments in the County so that resources can be effectively defined and utilised to meet statutory, national and locally defined targets of inspection, sampling, specific initiatives and tasks set by FSA Wales, other agencies, or based on local need.
- (e) Providing an open and transparent Food Service with clear lines of communication for all service users.

1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

The Food Service links to the Well Being Plan and the Council Plan. There are five key priorities contained in the Well Being Plan, these are:

- Community Safety
- Economy and Skills
- Environment
- Healthy and independent Living
- Resilient Communities

The Food Service Plan has direct links with the Council Plan 2017 – 2023. The Council Plan sets out the full list of the Council's seven priorities for the period 2017 – 2023. Each year, sub-priorities are chosen which will receive significant attention over a particular year and where we will make a bigger impact.

The Food Service sits within the Community and Business Protection Service of the Planning, Environment and Economy Portfolio. Each Service area within Community and Business Protection writes annual Operational Action Plans, which have been informed by a range of external and internal drivers and through a greater focus on robust risk assessment, intelligence led intervention, targeting and performance management. All team members contribute to devising the Operational Action Plans for each Service Area.

Food and Feed Law regulation is a statutory duty of the Council. Targets to be achieved are set in relation to both National Performance Accountability Measures and Service Improvement Data. A Corporate Performance Management System termed CAMMS, monitors performance of all services within the Council. The areas reported on are the Performance Accountability Measure, “the percentage of premises Broadly Compliant with Food Hygiene Legislation”. This is reported annually.

The following Service Improvement Data is also monitored and reported on within the Service Plan:

- (a) The percentage of Food Safety inspections carried out.
- (b) The percentage of Food Standards inspections carried out.
- (c) The percentage of new businesses inspected for Food Safety.
- (d) The percentage of new businesses inspected for Food Standards.
- (e) The percentage of Feed inspections carried out.
- (f) The percentage of new businesses inspected for Feed.

The Food Service will continue to implement performance management systems to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in a meaningful way to the citizens of Flintshire.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Authority Profile

Flintshire is a Unitary Authority. The County has an area of 43,464 hectares and a population of approximately 152,700 as per the 2011 Census. The County is made up of a mixture of small towns and conurbations, particularly to the south and predominately rural and agricultural land located in the north. The population is subjected to small seasonal fluctuations due to influx of tourists to the area. It has a number of industrial estates on which many manufacturers including food manufacturers are located, as well as headquarters for several food manufacturers including one large national food retailer. The coastal edge of Flintshire County Council abuts the Dee Estuary upon which cockle and mussel beds are situated and there is a small port located at Mostyn.

2.2 Organisational Structure

The Food Service is part of the Community and Business Protection Service within the Planning, Environment and Economy portfolio area. The functions of Food Safety, Food Standards and Feed sit under the Team Leader – Food Safety and Food Standards. However, the Line management of most officers undertaking Feed inspections is the responsibility of the Team Leader - Trading Standards Compliance and Animal Health as these Feed officers also undertake other Trading Standards functions such as Animal Health. Both team leaders report in to the Community and Business Protection Manager. The organisation structure of the Food Service is illustrated on the chart detailed in Appendix 1. Appendix 1 also includes the Management and Cabinet structure of the Council.

The Lead Officer for Food Safety and Food Standards is the Team Leader – Food Safety and Food Standards. The Lead Officer for Feed is one of the Trading Standards Officer who also undertakes Weights and Measures work in all types of premises.

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

Specialist services are provided by Public Health Wales and Public Analyst Scientific Services as the Public Analyst (See Section 3.5).

The scope of the respective component parts of the service are detailed below:

Food Safety

The Food Safety component of the service has the following responsibilities and service provision:

- Enforcement of relevant food safety and food hygiene legislation in all food establishments in Flintshire
- Registration of food businesses and approval of premises subject to compliance with product specific legislation such as meat products, fish, shellfish, fishery products and dairy products
- Implementation of the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013
- Investigation of food complaints that relate to fitness of food for human consumption and complaints that relate to the nature, substance or microbiological quality of the food, taking appropriate action as necessary
- Investigation of all complaints which relate to hygiene matters (premises, practices, personnel) in food businesses
- Investigation of sporadic cases of food-related notifiable diseases and suspected cases of food poisoning
- Investigation and control of outbreaks of food poisoning and food-related notifiable diseases
- Response to Food Alerts and food related incidents taking appropriate action as necessary
- Advice to new and existing business, responses to plans, licensing and land charges referrals
- Providing Export Health Certificates to allow movement of food from the UK to countries outside the EU
- Act as Home and/or Originating Authority for other companies where necessary
- Undertake food sampling in accordance with the Sampling Programme
- Educational and promotional initiatives, when appropriate and based on local need

Food Standards

The Food Standards component of the service has the

following responsibilities and service provision:

- Respond to requests for consumer advice in matters regarding food standards, labelling and composition
- Undertake a pre-planned programme of visits to food premises within Flintshire
- Investigation of complaints relating to the nature, quality or substance of food and complaints relating to mislabelling of food taking appropriate action as necessary
- Provide advice, information and assistance to food businesses
- Undertake food sampling in accordance with the Sampling Programme and in response to incidents
- Undertake promotional and educational initiatives, when appropriate
- Act as Home Authority and Originating Authority for other food businesses within Flintshire where necessary

Feed

The Feed component of the service has the following responsibilities and service provision:

- Undertake a pre-planned programme of visits to feed premises within Flintshire
- Undertake a pre-planned programme of targeted Feed sampling
- Provide advice, information and support to feed business operators, including manufacturers, distributors, and users of feed products
- Investigation of complaints relating to feedstuffs and complaint-based sampling of feed as required as part of complaint investigation

The Service Delivery Point for the Food Safety, Food Standards and Feed Service is Ty Dewi Sant, Ewloe. For all of the above, the Service Delivery Points are open during normal office hours of 8.30 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.

There is no official “out of hours” provision. However, there is a call centre who will contact team members should specific scenarios be reported to them.

2.4 Demands of the Food Service

There are 1404 food premises in Flintshire. Of the total number of food premises in Flintshire 595 premises are caterers, with the remainder being made up predominantly by 318 retailers. The catering establishments cover a wide range of premises varying from restaurants, schools, hotels, pubs, residential care homes, hospitals to mobile food vehicles.

There are currently 44 food manufacturers and packers and 26 distributors within Flintshire, of which 23 are approved under EU Regulation 853/2004 as they handle products of animal origin. These regulations place additional control measures on these types of premises and on the Local Authority.

The types of food manufacturers within Flintshire vary greatly in the types of processes they use to produce food. These range from cooked meat and ready meal manufacturers with national distribution, through to an on-farm milk pasteuriser supplying milk locally. The diversity in the types of manufacturers operating within the County places a significant demand on the breadth and depth of knowledge required by officers within the Team.

Dee Estuary and Shellfish

The Dee Estuary has two actively fished cockle beds falling within Flintshire's jurisdiction, one of which is newly classified for this season. The remaining beds fall within Wirral Council's jurisdiction. Given the nature of the estuary, the shellfish beds place significant demands on the Team, particularly during the six month cockle opening season.

The management of the Dee accounts for a large portion of the Sampling Budget due to the statutory sampling of the water and shellfish for both microbiological classification and for algal biotoxin monitoring.

In addition to the shellfish beds on the Dee, there are several companies operating as buyers, grading yards and / or collection points for cockle harvested elsewhere within the UK at different times throughout the year. This has placed significant demand on the service and it is anticipated this will continue throughout 2019-20. There may be further resource requirement as there are several proposed shellfish businesses including processing of shellfish, which will require approval under Regulation 853/2004.

Enforcement on the Dee involves a cross-agency partnership working with National Resources Wales, Wirral Council, the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), other Local Authorities, the North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities and FSA Wales.

Port Health

There is a small port at Mostyn for which the Food Team has responsibility in relation to the ships coming into port requiring a Ship Sanitation Certificate or a food hygiene inspection.

Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 and associated legislation

Since 28th November 2013, the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 mandated businesses with a food hygiene rating to display a valid food hygiene rating sticker. The administration of this Act accounts for a considerable volume of work for the Team.

The introduction of the Food Hygiene Rating (Promotion of Food Hygiene Rating) (Wales) Regulations 2016, requires takeaway food premises to provide a specific bi-lingual phrase on all their promotional literature which contains a price of the food and a method of ordering it remotely.

The Service is committed to delivering the requirements of the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated regulations.

Premises Profile

The premises profile, as defined in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) August 2018, is detailed in Table 1:

Table 1: Breakdown of premises profile by risk band for Food Safety and Food Standards.

FOOD STANDARDS			FOOD SAFETY			
Risk	Min.	No. of		Risk	Min.	No. of
High	12 months	9	High	A	6 months	1
				B	12 months	27
Medium	2 years	393		C	18 months	470
Low	5 years	922	Low	D	2 years	330
				E	3 years	513
OUTSIDE		63		OUTSIDE		45
UNRATED		17		UNRATED		18
TOTAL		1404		TOTAL		1404

Please note: there are 5 bands of risk for Food Safety, with A to C being deemed to be High Risk and only 3 bands of risk in Food Standards, with only A being deemed High Risk.

Feed

Under the EU Feed Hygiene Regulation (183/2005) feed activities are clearly defined and are broken down in to 'Approved' and 'Registered' feed activities. Activities requiring Approval include any activity involving the manufacture and/or placing on the market of feed additives including zootechnical products (the technology of animal husbandry), with all such activities being classed as high risk. There are currently no businesses in Flintshire that have an Approval under the Regulations.

'Registered' feed activities are all other feed activities that are undertaken of which there are 14 registerable feed activities defined and coded by the FSA these are termed as 'R Codes' and run consecutively from R01 (the highest risk activity) through to R14 (the lowest risk activity)..

In Flintshire there are currently a total of 455 registered feed premises which are registerable across a wide range of feed activities. These activities are made up as follows: 380 are registered as farms (Livestock or arable), 8 as feed manufacturing and packing businesses, 30 as on farm feed mixers, and 24 businesses registered for the

supply of surplus food or co-products of manufacture. The remainder of the 8 registered premises are engaged in, transportation and distribution of feed.

The diversity in the types of Feed Businesses operating and activities being undertaken within the County places a significant demand on the breadth and depth of knowledge required by officers within the Team.

Following a review by FSA Wales in 2014 of the delivery of Animal Feeding Stuffs Enforcement across Wales, the system for risk assessing feed activities was simplified with all registerable feed activities across Wales being broken down into one of two categories based on risk. These two categories are referred to as '*Above the Line*' (or High Risk) and '*Below the Line*' (or Low Risk).

Above the line activities are the high risk activities, which include all businesses undertaking any 'Approved' feed activity and those engaged in 'Registered' feed activities involving production, processing, storage, transportation, sale of feed, or supply of food co-products, or surplus foods for use in animal feed and ultimately human consumption of those animals as part of the human food chain. These activities require a 'qualified' and 'competent' officer to inspect them.

Below the line activities are the low risk activities that include premises that are feeding animal feed stuffs to livestock or growing straight feed crops that are to be consumed in their natural state such as silage. This applies to all of Flintshire's farms. While these activities have a lower requirement for officers to be able to perform these activities, only requiring that an officer be 'competent' to complete this work.

Since 1st April 2015, the number of inspections of feed premises has been determined by FSA Wales with the launch of the FSA Wales sponsored 'North Wales Feed Enforcement Delivery Plan'. The plan for 2018/19 required Flintshire to inspect premises across the county for a total of 98 registered feed activities, 19 of these were above the line with the remaining 79 being below the line.

The figures for Flintshire for 2019/20 are 8 above the line inspections (High Risk) plus 3 with unknown activity, and 59 below the line (Low Risk) inspections giving a total of 70 for the year. The breakdown of the Feed premises profile is detailed below by risk band:

Table 2: Breakdown of the premises profile by risk band for Feed.

FEEDINGSTUFFS		
Risk	Frequency of Inspection	No. of registered activities subject to inspection
High	Every 3 years (as per Feed Code of Practice) However, currently inspections are being determined by FSA as part of Regional Delivery Plan. Inspections due for 2019/20 = 8 High Risk + 3 unknown activity.	8
Low / Medium	Every 14 years (as per Feed Code of Practice) However, currently inspections are being determined by FSA as part of Regional Delivery Plan. Inspections due for 2019/20 = 59 Low Risk.	59
TOTAL inspectable registered activities		67 + 3 unknown activity

The vast majority of food business owners are English speaking with a minor requirement for written reports in Welsh. All advisory literature is produced bilingually in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards of the Council which came in to force on 30 March 2016. Approximately 14% of residents in Flintshire are recorded as Welsh speaking.

Approximately 4% of food businesses are of ethnic origin (Asian, Chinese, Turkish and Greek) and once again advisory literature is available in a range of ethnic languages to assist in understanding.

2.5 Enforcement Policy

The Food Service undertakes enforcement in accordance with the Public Protection Enforcement Policy which has been updated and approved by Members in 2010. This policy has been based upon the principles of the Enforcement Concordat adopted by Members in September 2000 and the Regulators Compliance Code.

There is also an Enforcement Policy for residents entitled “Regulation and Enforcement – Involving Local Residents”, which was approved by Council in September 2011.

3.0 SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1. Food Premises Inspections

The Food Service will carry out inspections in accordance with pre-planned programmes drawn up annually and commencing on 1st April each year, to coincide with the reporting requirements for the Service to the Food Standards Agency Wales, as part of the Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS). These inspection programmes are based on the risk rating of the premises. There is a commitment to deliver all interventions which are due in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2018.

Food Safety and Food Standards

The performance of the Food Safety and Food Standards Team in 2018/2019 was excellent with the Team achieving 100% of High Risk inspections for both Food Safety and Food Standards.

The target of 87% of new businesses to be inspected for Food Hygiene was exceeded with 89.5% actually being achieved. The Food Standards New Business target of 87%, was also exceeded by achieving 88.4%. This was enabled by the majority of new business inspections being undertaken by the officers who are authorised to carry out both Food Standards and Food Safety inspections thereby facilitating the inspections being completed by one visit. This also ties in with the Reducing the Burden on Business agenda by combining the two types of inspection. There is a commitment to prioritising new business interventions in line with the Food Law Practice Guidance (Wales) 2012.

There is a Public Accountability Measure in place, namely the percentage of businesses which are Broadly Compliant with Food Hygiene legislation. For 2018-19, this figure has improved from 97.4 to 97.9% of food businesses within Flintshire falling into this category.

All low risk premises have received a physical inspection or an alternative enforcement questionnaire has been completed to assess risk.

A full breakdown of performance is provided in Appendix 3.

The key objectives for the coming year in relation to programmed inspection and enforcement work are as follows:

Food Safety

- Inspect 100% of all food businesses due a food hygiene inspection
- To follow the requirements of the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 and associated regulations
- To revisit all premises receiving a Food Hygiene Rating of 2 or lower to assess compliance, in line with the All Wales Revisit Policy written by the All Wales Food Safety Expert Group. Please note – this type of revisit does not result in a new food hygiene rating.
- To undertake proactive inspections of shellfish documentation to ensure traceability of shellfish being handled within Flintshire

Food Standards

- Inspect 100% of all food premises due a Food Standards inspection in 2019-20.
- To focus on Allergen Management as part of the programmed inspections in Medium Risk takeaways
- To revisit all premises with major non-compliance with Allergen Information requirements.

A full breakdown of premises programmed for inspection 2019-2020 in relation to their risk band is given in Appendix 2. For Food Hygiene this gives a total of 634 inspections due and for Food Standards a total of 348 inspections due.

Last year, the number of Food Hygiene and Food Standards revisits was 32. It is anticipated, the figure for this year will increase to at least 50 due to the revisits that may be required on Allergen management at takeaway premises.

Feed

Following a major review of feed service delivery across Wales conducted by FSA Wales in 2014 all feed work across Wales since 01st April 2015 has been delivered

as part of collaborative working based on regional delivery plans. These plans have been developed in conjunction with FSA Wales and are based on priorities set by FSA Wales.

Currently the FSA are specifying the level of inspection each year as part of their plan. For 2018/19, there was a premises inspection target of 99 high and low/medium risk premises inspections programmed within Flintshire. This target was met in full.

The target set for programmed inspections for 2019/20 is 70 inspections. The breakdown of these inspections by the premises activity code is detailed in Table C in Appendix 2.

3.1.1 Additional Targeted Inspection/ Enforcement Activity

Additional targeted inspection and enforcement activity due to be undertaken is as follows:

- Effective and professional liaison, communication and co-operation with other LA's and Regulatory Delivery relating to Primary Authority (PA) matters.
- Investigation of notified food safety related fraud incidents, such as illegal slaughter of meat, including referrals made anonymously.
- Issue of Ship Sanitation Certificates as appropriate for incoming vessels to the Port of Mostyn.
- Appropriate response and liaison with other agencies as necessary for Civil Contingency matters.
- Assessing non-compliance with the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 and associated regulations in regard to mandatory display of food hygiene ratings stickers and the inclusion of the mandatory bi-lingual statement on promotional literature for takeaways. This is to build on the previous project work that was undertaken during 2018-19, where a total of 123 takeaway businesses were checked for the correct display of their rating stickers, the correct inclusion of the bi-lingual statement on their takeaway menus and the Allergen Information compliance on their takeaway menus.

3.1.2 Resources for Inspections and Additional Enforcement Activity

Food Safety and Food Standards

The programmed food hygiene inspections will be undertaken by Environmental Health Officers (EHO) and Food Safety Officers (FSO). A full breakdown of resources is given in 4.2 – Staffing Allocation. Food Standards work will be carried by our Trading Standards Officer, EHOs and FSOs.

Other areas of Trading Standards work within food premises such as Weights and Measures will be carried out by the Trading Standards Officer within the Food Team. This places an absolute requirement for a fully competent Trading Standards Officer to be within the Team.

Feed

All aspects of Feed work will be carried out by 0.3 FTE fully qualified Trading Standards Officer and 0.7 FTE Trading Standards Enforcement Officer. This work is to be distributed across 7 officers who are qualified and/or competent in accordance with FSA Feed Law Code of Practice requirements. 6 of the Feed officers are based in the Trading Standards Compliance and Animal Health Team and 1 officer is based in the Food Safety and Food Standards team.

3.2 Food/Feed Complaints

Food complaints cover the full range relating to fitness for human consumption, presence of extraneous matter in foods, microbial contamination and Food Standards issues such as food labelling, chemical adulteration and spoilage of food.

It is the policy of the Food Service to investigate all food complaints reported including those made anonymously.

Food Safety and Food Standards

All food complaints are dealt with in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2018, having regard to the documented Public Protection Enforcement Policy 2010.

Based on statistics for previous years, the estimated number of Food Safety and Food Standards complaints is between 110 and 140.

Please note the above figures do not indicate dealing

with food complaints referred by other Local Authorities when acting as Home or Originating Authority.

Feed

All feed complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Feed Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014, having regard to the documented Public Protection Enforcement Policy 2010.

The number of Feed related complaints received by the service is low, typically no more than 3 a year.

3.3 Primary Authority Principle

Food Safety and Food Standards

Flintshire County Council subscribes to both the Primary and the Home Authority Principle. The Food Service acts as both Home Authority and/or Originating Authority for approximately 50 food businesses.

Flintshire is also committed to improving relationships with business and will continue to develop relationships with business and encourage effective business engagement at all times.

Feed

There is currently no formal Primary Authority relationship between FCC and any Flintshire based Feed Business Operator. Iceland Stores are engaged in a pilot trial scheme working directly with the FSA. This has involved the company registering all of its UK stores for the supply of surplus food (morning goods) for use in the animal feed chain and ultimately the human food chain.

3.4 Advice to Business

The policy of the Food Service is to provide a balanced approach between the provision of advice and enforcement activity. The Service is committed to providing an effective and responsive advice and assistance service, both during inspections or upon request, for all Flintshire businesses, including a service in accordance with the Regulatory Delivery Primary Authority Principle and the Local Government Regulation (previously LACORS) Home Authority Principle.

In addition, the Service provides advisory literature,

(either produced nationally or in-house) to businesses to assist them with compliance with relevant legislation. This is currently free of charge. The potential to charge for this type of service is being explored.

Food Safety and Food Standards

In order to maximise the use of limited resources, advice is targeted as follows:

- During inspections and as part of follow up documentation.
- Start-up advice on request.
- Through guidance information available on the Food Team's website pages.
- Distribution of relevant food safety and food standards material to food businesses.
- Advice and information is given to businesses requesting guidance either by telephone, email or post.

Based on last year's trends, the estimated number of requests for advice is anticipated to be approximately 160 - 200 in relation to Food Safety and Standards. Advice to businesses is provided by all members of the Team. This figure may increase pending EU Exit.

Feed

Flintshire is committed to supporting feed businesses and working with them to enable compliance with all regulatory and best practice standards, and to protect animal health and welfare, and the human food chain. In order to maximise the use of limited resources, advice is targeted as follows:

- During inspections and as part of follow up documentation.
- Start-up advice on request to new businesses.
- Through sign posting to guidance information available on the Trading Standards Wales and FSA Wales websites.
- Distribution of relevant feed hygiene and standards material to feed businesses.
- Advice and information is normally given to businesses requesting guidance either by telephone, e-mail or post, or where appropriate

through a visit to the business operator by an officer

3.5 Food Inspection and Sampling

Food Safety and Food Standards

Sampling will be carried out in accordance with the documented Sampling Policy for the Food Service which was referred for Member Approval in July 2001. The sampling programme is devised so that the procurement of samples will follow a risk based approach. The programme takes in to account statutory requirements as well as the requirements of the FSA, the Welsh Food Microbiological Forum and local need.

Samples taken for Food Standards issues are submitted for analysis by the formally appointed and NAMAS accredited Public Analyst for the Council (and Agricultural Analyst for Animal Feed purposes):

Public Analyst Scientific Services
Valiant Way
Wolverhampton
WV9 5GB

Samples taken as part of the Sampling Programme for Food Safety issues are submitted for microbiological examination by the designated and NAMAS accredited laboratory of:

Public Health Wales
Ysbyty Gwynedd
Penrhosgarnedd
Bangor

Each Local Authority is allocated sampling accreditation by Public Health Wales.

The Food Sampling Programme does not preclude the need to undertake reactive sampling e.g. as a result of a food complaint or during food poisoning investigations. Sampling undertaken as part of an Infectious Disease Notification or Outbreak are sent to the laboratory at Ysbyty Gwynedd, Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor.

The team were awarded a small grant of £264 for taking part in Opson VIII, which focussed on Meat Speciation. All our samples did not show substitution but did show low level cross-contamination with other meat species.

A member of the team attends the WFMF, which is

responsible for devising Food Safety Sampling Surveys across Wales, based on risk assessment and intelligence to better target resources at particular foods or food poisoning organisms of concern within the UK.

Samples are taken as part of programmed inspections at manufacturers and premises where product specific legislation applies. The budget for sampling will remain the same as it was in 2018-19.

The anticipated number of samples for Food Standards is around 60 including samples taken for labelling checks.

Samples will be taken as part of programmed inspections at manufacturers, approved premises and premises where product specific legislation applies.

For Food Safety, there will be statutory sampling at approved premises and taking part in WFMF surveys to include the Shopping Basket survey.

The anticipated number of samples for Food Microbiological examination is around 80 samples including the shellfish classification and biotoxin monitoring samples.

Feed

Sampling of Feeding stuffs during 2019-20 will again be undertaken as part of the FSA funded North Wales Feed Service Delivery Plan.

Feed sampling undertaken during 2018/19 included analysis for mycotoxins and heavy metal residues. It is envisaged a similar number of samples analysis will be required this year.

Other than sampling directly funded by FSA Wales any other feed samples taken will only be done in response to complaints received or feed safety incidents.

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

Investigation and control of outbreaks of food related infectious disease will be carried out in accordance with the Communicable Disease Outbreak Plan for Wales was approved by Members in 2011.

Investigations of sporadic notifications of food related infections disease shall follow the existing documented procedure within the Section. Based on previous year's trends, it is estimated that there will be approximately between 220 and 250 cases of sporadic notifications and between 0 and 10 outbreaks. Public Health Wales have introduced molecular testing of faecal samples of suspected cases and this has resulted in an increase in the number of positive cases detected for specific organisms.

Campylobacter was the highest incidence of food-borne illness for 2018-2019 in Flintshire, with 155 cases being notified to us. The reduction of the incidence of *Campylobacter* is identified as a priority within the Food Standard Agency's Strategy 2015-2020.

Outbreaks are characteristically resource intensive but do not follow an annual trend, therefore the anticipated burden on staffing cannot be predicted. However, should they occur the impact on resources cannot be over-estimated and would require rapid contingency planning for maintaining the delivery of the rest of the Service. They also involve close liaison and cross-agency working between Public Health Wales and other Local Authorities.

3.7 Food/Feed Safety Incidents

Food Safety and Food Standards

Food Alerts will be initiated and responded to in accordance the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2018. Responses to Food Alerts will be kept in a centralised documented format and the contact details for the Team and relevant Agencies (including out of hour's contacts) will be kept up to date. It is difficult to quantify the resource implication of this function as it depends upon the category of Food Alert and the extent of food or businesses affected within Flintshire.

There were several incidents within 2018-19 which required considerable investigation work and enforcement action by the Team. This included an investigation into the placing on market of yoghurt produced in a manufacturing environment which was not approved to do so. This resulted in a successful prosecution of the business.

Feed

Alerts will be initiated and responded to in accordance with the Feed Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014. Responses to Feed Alerts will be kept in a centralised documented format and the contact details for the Team and relevant Agencies (including out of hour's contacts) will be kept up to date. It is difficult to quantify the resource implication of this function as it depends upon the nature of the Feed Alert and the source of supply, type, and quantity of feed product involved as well as the distribution of the feed.

3.8 Liaison with Other Organisations

The Food Service as a whole is committed to ensuring effective liaison with other relevant organisations to enforce consistency of approach. This includes liaison with:

- FSA Wales
- Regulatory Delivery
- Professional bodies such as the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and Chartered Trading Standards Institute
- Public Health Wales, National Resources Wales, CEFAS, Animal and Plant Health Agency and other relevant advisory/liaison bodies
- Other Local Authorities in Wales as a whole by attending the All Wales Food Safety Expert Group, the All Wales Communicable Disease Expert Group and the WFMF and regionally, by attending the North Wales Food and Communicable Disease Task Group.
- Other relevant local bodies e.g. local fishermen by way of the North Wales and Deeside Shellfish Liaison Group.
- Other Departments within Flintshire County Council, such as the Planning Department, with whom a system of formal consultation with relevant sections of the Community and Business Protection Service has been set up so that prompt, appropriate advice may be given to ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

In addition to all of the above, liaison is also maintained between members of the Food Team by monthly Team Meetings. There is also a weekly management meeting for Team Leaders and the Service Manager within Community and Business Protection.

The Feed element of the service is committed to ensuring effective liaison with partners and other relevant organisations to ensure and enforce consistency of approach. This includes liaison with:

- Food Standards Agency Wales (FSA Wales)
- Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)
- Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
- Professional bodies such as the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI), National Trading Standards (NTS) and the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO).
- Other Local Authorities across Wales and the UK
- Partner Local Authorities in the North Wales Feed Enforcement Delivery Plan (Wrexham, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, Ynys-Mon, and Conwy).
- Liaison with regional and national panels and expert interest groups including the joint WHoTS/FSA Feed Working Group, WHoTS and UK Animal Health and Welfare Panels etc.

In addition to the above, liaison is maintained within the Feed element of the Trading Standards Compliance and Animal Health Team through regular team meetings with the Team Leader – Food Safety and Food Standards. They also have regular one to ones with their line manager. There is also a weekly management meeting for Team Leaders and the Service Manager within Community and Business Protection.

3.9 Food Safety/ Food Standards and Feed Promotion

Educational and promotional activities are important components of a comprehensive Food Service.

Food Safety and Food Standards

Promotional work programmed for this year includes taking part in the first World Food Safety Day on 7th June 2019. The focus of this event is the revised FSA Traceability, Withdrawal and Recall guidance.

There is no Food Safety Week this year as the FSA have recognized that LAs already have additional considerations in relation to EU Exit to manage.

Feed

Officers of the service work with the trade offering advice and guidance on compliance with legal and best practice standards during routine inspection work and when

carrying out routine animal health and welfare and disease control work.

Promotion work is done as part of routine inspection or in response to enquiries made by business to the service.

4.0 RESOURCES

4.1 Financial Allocation

The financial allocation for the Food Service is split between budgets provided for the Food Safety and Food Standards and for Animal Health. The overall level of expenditure providing the Food Safety and Food Standards Service for 2019-20 is detailed in Table 3.

Table 3: Budget for the Food Safety and Food Standards Team 2019-20

COST ITEM	FINANCIAL ALLOCATION
(a) Staffing (total staff costs)	£520,678
(b) Travel (mileage and rail warrants)	£9,292
(c) Equipment	£2,981
(d) Sampling	£5177
(e) Shellfish Sampling	£6000
(f) Support Costs for Printing and Translation	£500
(g) Training	Centrally held budget. Accessed via application

The allocation for Food Sampling work covers both Food Safety and Food Standards. This is in addition to the allocation provided by Public Health Wales. Additional funding can and will be made available should there be an incident which requires it.

Table 4 shows the overall level of expenditure for Feed Service delivery:

Table 4: Budget for the Feed Service Delivery 2019/20

COST ITEM	FINANCIAL ALLOCATION
(a) Staffing (total staff costs)	£14141.30
(b) Travel (including mileages and Subsistence	£2000.00
(c) Equipment	£500.00
(d) Sampling	Budget is held Regionally for North Wales with funding allocated on completion of FSA Wales allocated targeted sampling project work.
(e) Training	Centrally held budget. Accessed via application
(f) Total	£16641.30

4.2 Staffing Allocation

Food Safety and Food Standards

The Food Safety and Food Standards team is made up of the Team Leader – Food Safety and Food Standards 1.0 FTE, 5.5 FTE EHOs, 3.0 FTE Food Safety Officers and 1.0 FTE Trading Standards Officer. All members of the team are permanent positions.

Administrative support is provided by 1.0 FTE Administration Officer. This role is situated within Social Services as a central administration function.

In accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2018, all Environmental Health Officers in post are qualified Environmental Health Officers, registered with the Environmental Health Registration Board (E.H.R.B.). Food Safety Officers are qualified to the Higher Certificate in Food Premises Inspection and all officers are qualified in HACCP Principles (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points). All three of the Food Safety Officers hold the Higher Certificate in Food Control.

All staff are authorised appropriately for the duties they perform. All EHOs meet the post two year qualified competency requirement to use all enforcement powers

required by the Code of Practice. The majority of Officers also hold the Lead Auditor qualification.

The Trading Standards Officer holds the Diploma in Trading Standards and has also successfully completed the five day QMS Auditor/Lead Auditor training course.

The full breakdown of resources required to deliver the Food Safety and Food Standards service is given below:

Table 5: Full Breakdown of Resources by Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to Deliver the Food Safety and Food Standards Service

Intervention Type	Food Safety FTE	Food Standards FTE
Inspections	5.0	2.5
Revisits	0.3	
Complaints	0.4	
Primary Authority	0.1	
Food Incidents	0.2	
Food Business advice/promotion and other Non-Official Controls Interventions	0.4	
Communicable Disease	0.5	N/A
Sampling	0.1	0.1

Please note – this breakdown of resources includes the 0.2 FTE operational aspect of the Team Leader. The remainder of the Team Leader 0.8 FTE is not taken account of above as this includes the operational management functions of this role including Feed and Corporate matters. A further 0.1 FTE of the Trading Standards Officer role is spent regulating other Trading Standards legislation in food businesses such as Weights and Measures legislation.

We are able to fulfil the inspection resource requirement by completing the majority of inspections as joint inspections i.e. the officer does both a Food Safety and Food Standards audit during the same visit. This flexibility is key to ensuring we can deliver the service level expected based on current resources.

Feed

All aspects of Feed work will be carried out by seven officers of the service with the overall management of the area by the Team Leader – Food Safety and Food Standards. There has been a change to the Lead Feed Officer to reflect these changes in accountability so that one of the Trading Standards Officers is the Lead Feed Officer.

All officers involved in the delivery of the feed service also undertake other duties which are non-Feed related. The Feed component of their roles equates to 0.3 FTE Trading Standards Officer and 0.7 FTE Trading Standards Enforcement Officer.

Three Trading Standards Officers are officers within the two teams that satisfy all criteria as a 'qualified' and 'competent' feed officer, this includes holding the Diploma in Trading Standards (or equivalent), successful completion of the five day QMS Auditor/Lead Auditor Training Course, completion of CIEH accredited HACCP training, and participation in a FSA programme of Feed Training in conjunction with their approved training provider. Such qualification means that these officers are suitably qualified and competent to undertake all aspects of Feed work.

Four Trading Standards Enforcement Officers satisfy the 'competency' criteria based on experience and training that enables them to perform Below the Line (Low Risk) Feed work on both Livestock and Arable Farms.

All seven officers satisfy the FSA requirements re qualification and /or competency to enable them to undertake Feed enforcement work. This includes meeting the requirement to undertake a minimum of 10 hours relevant CPD annually.

4.3 Staff Development Plan

During the forthcoming year the following training is planned:

- (i) Support of national and regional seminars on relevant subject matters.
- (ii) In-house training sessions on relevant subject matters.

Each member of the Team will receive the required ten hours Continuing Professional Development as required by the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2018. Staff will be subject to annual individual Staff Appraisals in line with the Corporate H.R. Policy with a mid-year review which identifies and tracks training and development needs. All staff also have monthly one to ones with the Team Leader to identify and monitor areas requiring development.

Some of the training courses attended by staff during 2018-19 include:

- All Wales Consistency Exercises on Food Hygiene Ratings
- Import and Export of Food
- Food Supplements
- Contaminants in Food
- Food Factory Standards Inspection
- Essential and Advanced Microbiology

Training planned for 2019-20 includes:

- All Wales Consistency on Food Hygiene Ratings
- Food Standards for Food Safety Officers
- Food Lead Officer – Food Law Code of Practice Competency Framework
- Food Sampling
- Allergen Management and Enforcement
- Internal Cascade Training

A full list of training required has been submitted to the All Wales Food Safety Expert Group as they provide the FSA with guidance on training programmes to be delivered on an All Wales basis. Team members attend this training as per the allocation given to each local authority.

Feed

All authorised officers have attended training to ensure continued competence and qualification and will continue to undertake ongoing training as part of CPD for feed during 2019/20.

All feed training is provided regionally across Wales as

part of the North Wales Regional Feed Enforcement Delivery Plan that is funded by FSA.

5.0 QUALITY ASSESSMENT

5.1 Quality Assessment Food Safety and Food Standards

Within the Food Service, quality systems are in place to ensure that work is completed and checked by a competent person in line with the fully documented Quality Monitoring Procedures. Documented procedures and work instructions exist to ensure consistency of approach with various computer report mechanisms to check accuracy on the APP Database. Work Instruction is provided on key areas of work retained within Formal Procedure Manuals.

The Team Leader sits on the North Wales Food and Communicable Disease Task Group, the All Wales Food Safety Expert Group and chairs the All Wales Communicable Disease Expert Group. These forums offer the opportunity to discuss a wide range of quality issues relevant to Food Law Enforcement.

The Service is required to submit an Annual Return to FSA Wales via Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS). This details the inspections achieved, enforcement and educational activities undertaken.

Feed

Quality systems are also in place to ensure that work is completed and checked by a competent person in line with the fully documented Quality Monitoring Procedures. Documented procedures and work instructions exist to ensure consistency of approach with various computer report mechanisms to check accuracy on the APP Database. Work Instruction is provided on Key Areas of work retained within Formal Procedure Manuals.

In addition, for the whole Food service, external audits including focused audits, are undertaken by the Food Standards Agency Wales (frequency determined by FSA). The service received its last full audit in 2013. A Food Hygiene Rating Desk Top Audit was completed in 2017. The resulting report has just been published with a set of recommendations made within it. Flintshire performed well in this audit. All recommendations made which applied to the Food Service have been implemented.

6.0 REVIEW PROCESS

6.1 Review against Service Plan

The Service Plan shall be subject to annual review. Performance against this Service Plan is monitored by several means:

- Monthly team meetings
- Monthly one to ones with individual team members
- Informal team briefings held on a regular basis

As detailed in 3.0, the Food Service Team have performed to an excellent standard achieving the target for all Service Improvement Data. They are also in line with the Audit Action Plan for the Food Standards Agency Wales.

Appendix 3 provides full quantitative analysis of service delivery during 2018-19.

6.2 Review of Performance Against 2018-2019 Service Plan

Food Safety and Food Standards

General achievements of note are listed:

- Achieved 100% of programmed Food Hygiene inspections
- Achieved 100% of programmed Food Standards inspections
- Exceeded the target for the percentage of new food businesses we became aware of within the year receiving an inspection for both Hygiene and Standards
- The percentage of premises with a Food Hygiene rating of 5 has increased from 79.0% to 81.4%. 97.8% of businesses have a rating of 3 or higher compared to 97.3% in the previous year
- Successful prosecution of a manufacturer of dairy-based products who did not have the relevant approval to do so
- Shellfish cross agency working has been significantly developed with joint visits with NRW being regularly undertaken

Feed

Achievements for 2018/19:

6.3 Areas of Focus and Improvement for 2019-20

- Achieving 100% of inspection targets. The breakdown of the profile of premises inspected differs slightly to those on the original plan. However, this was done in agreement with the Lead Regional Feed Officer
- Samples were taken in accordance with the regional sampling plan. All samples were found to be satisfactory for Heavy Metal residues and Mycotoxins

Areas requiring focus for the forthcoming year are detailed below. The after school clubs work is repeated from last year –this is due to the demands placed on the team due to the prosecution case and the increase in shellfish-related work.

The areas are as follows:

- Identify and inspect food businesses that are not currently registered as a food business and so require registration and inspection. This is to include any primary producers in the area.
- Undertake targeted interventions in takeaway premises regarding Allergen Management
- Further develop the cross-agency and regional working in relation to Shellfish enforcement
- To inspect all after school clubs within the County for both Food Hygiene and Food Standards

Feed

- To contact all businesses that have been sent registration forms but have not returned a completed document
- To devise a delivery plan to inspect the remaining registered businesses that have not yet received a Feed inspection
- To develop a procedure on the maintenance of the Feed registration database to ensure its accuracy in relation to premises who are members of Farm Assurance schemes

6.4 Forthcoming Considerations

There are several considerations which may influence or impact on Service Delivery for 2019/20. These are detailed below:

The Service Plan relies on the current level of staffing to be maintained. These posts will need to remain filled for the whole of 2019/20 for the commitments made for Service Delivery to be met.

Effect of EU Exit – we are still awaiting an indication as to the effect of the EU Exit on Food Hygiene, Food Standards and Feed legislation and its enforcement. Given the impending date it is anticipated there will need to be substantial consideration of any changes during Quarter 2 and 3 of this financial year.

Food Hygiene and Food Standards Specific

As outlined in previous Service Plans, the Food Standards Agency launched a consultation early in 2016 regarding changing the delivery model for Food and Feed Controls called Regulating the Future (RoF). The objective of the programme is to 'define and then deliver a new regulatory blueprint for a food industry unrecognizable from the one that existed when the current system was designed'.

The proposal is to alter the blueprint of the delivery model to best support compliance and protecting consumers' interests in line with the FSA's 2015-20 Strategy of 'food we can trust'. They were working to a timetable of January 2020 for the final blueprint to be finalized with several areas where a timetable of March 2019 have been given to tie in with the original date for EU Exit.

Whilst there has been some progress with the various work streams within the RoF programme, these are not yet at the rolling out stage.

Feed Specific

FSA Wales have communicated their intention to audit the Feed delivery across Wales in 2019-20. A proposed scope has been sent to local authorities and comments have been provided on this document. We are awaiting further information in this regard.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

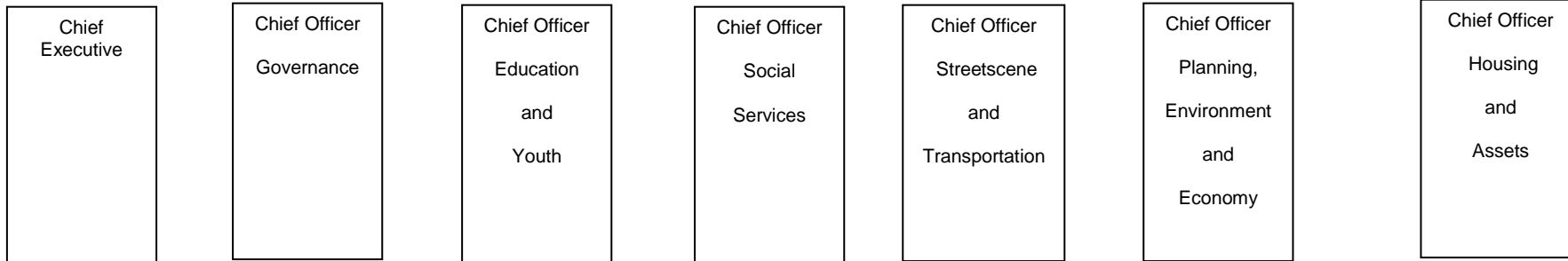


Chart 2

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – POLITICAL STRUCTURE

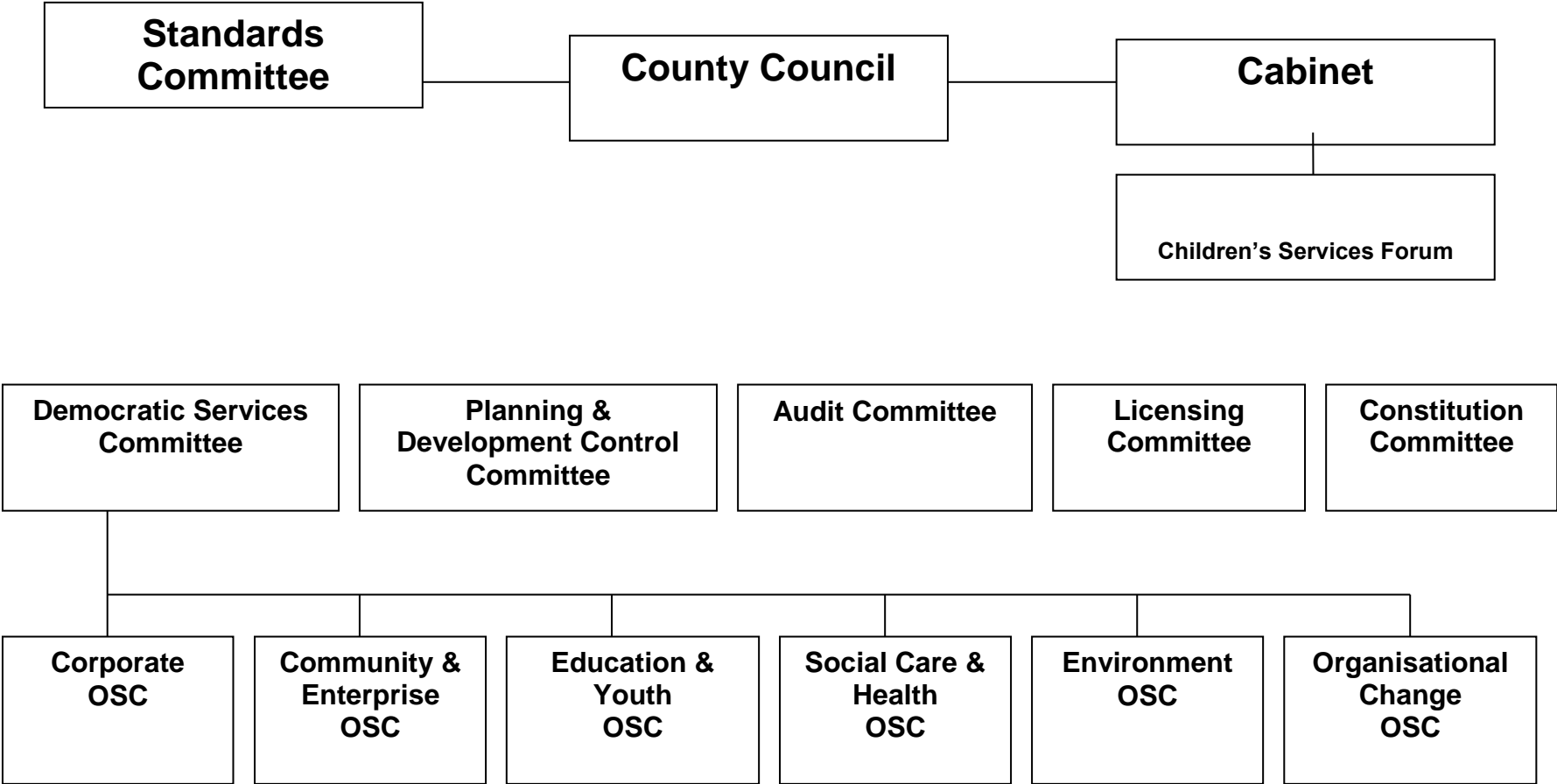
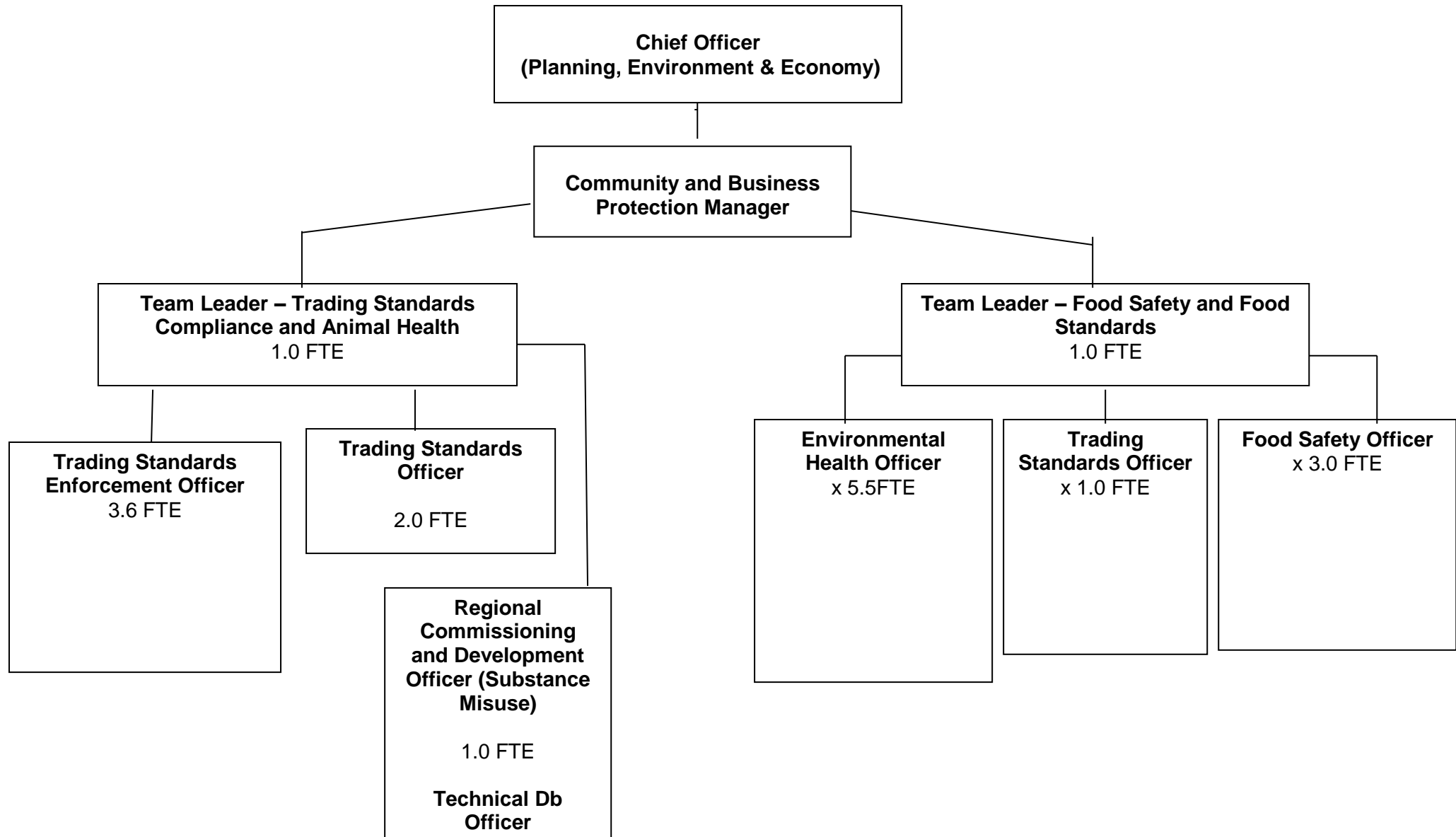


Chart 3

COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS PROTECTION - FOOD SERVICE



APPENDIX 2

Please find below a breakdown of the profile of programmed Food Safety and Food Standards inspections for 2019-20 by Risk Rating:

Table A

PROGRAMMED INSPECTIONS - FOOD SAFETY	
Risk	Number Due
A	1
B	27
C	250
D	143
E	179
Unrated	34
TOTAL	634

Table B

PROGRAMMED INSPECTIONS - FOOD STANDARDS	
Risk	Number Due
A	9
B	192
C	95
Unrated	52
TOTAL	348

The Risk Rating is determined in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice. It dictates the frequency of which the food premises must receive a full food hygiene or food standards inspection.

For Food Safety High Risk premises are those with a Risk Rating of A - C. For Food Standards High Risk premises are those with a Risk Rating of A.

Please find below a breakdown of the profile of programmed Feed inspections for 2019-20 by Feed Business Activity. The figure in brackets denote the total number of inspections due within the activity code, with the un-bracketed number denoting the actual number of inspections to be achieved

Table C

	PROGRAMMED INSPECTIONS - FEED	
High Risk (ATL)/Low Risk (BTL)	Registered/Approved Feed Business Activity	Number Due
High Risk	Manufacturer of Feed	3
High Risk	Co Product Producers	
High Risk	Feed Stores	1
High Risk	Feed Distributor	
High Risk	Feed Transporter	
High Risk	On Farm Feed Mixers	2
High Risk	Supplier of Surplus Food	
High Risk	Pet Food Manufacturer	2
Low Risk	Livestock Farms	57 (142)
Low Risk	Arable Farms	2
	Total	67 + 3 unknown R code activity

APPENDIX 3 – PERFORMANCE 2018-19

Please note - the numbers in brackets denote the number of premises that had ceased trading during the year

Food Safety

Risk	Programmed	Achieved
A) High Risk	1	100%
B) High Risk	21 (4)	100%
C) High Risk	223 (59)	100%
D Low Risk	81 (21)	100%
E Low Risk	110 (24)	100%
Unrated	21 (1)	100%
TOTAL	457 (109)	100%

TOTAL Number of Interventions Undertaken (including Revisits and Advisory Visits)	827
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Food Standards

Risk	Programmed	Achieved
High	9 (2)	100%
Medium	127 (36)	100%
Low	45 (12)	100%
Unrated	31 (1)	100%
TOTAL	212 (51)	100%

TOTAL Number of Interventions Undertaken (including Revisits)	454
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Feed Inspections (as per requirements of FSA/WHoTS Regional FLEDP 2018/19)

Risk	Programmed	Achieved
High	19	18
Medium/Low	79	80
Premises found on inspections to have ceased trading	N/A	14
TOTAL	98	112

Food Hygiene Ratings

Profile of Ratings within Flintshire: May 2019

	5	4	3	2	1	0
	Very Good	Good	Generally Satisfactory	Improvement Necessary	Major Improvement Necessary	Urgent Improvement Necessary
% of Premises	81.4	13.5	2.9	1.1	1.1	0

Number of Requests for Rescore Visit to be undertaken - 17

Number of Appeals on Rating - 1

Number of Fixed Penalty Notices - 1

Right to Reply - 0

Other data in relation to Demands on Food Service

Food and Feeding Stuffs Complaints

Food Safety number of complaints	-	103 linked to Food businesses
Food Standards number of complaints	-	14
Feeding Stuffs number of complaints	-	1

Advice to Business

Food Safety	-	144 requests for advice
Food Standards	-	13 requests for advice
Feeding Stuffs	-	8 requests for advice

Food and Feeding Stuffs Inspection and Sampling

Food Safety	-	54 Food samples + 15 Shellfish
Food Standards	-	41 samples – monitoring for composition and labelling
Feeding Stuffs	-	4

Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease (Food Safety only)

Sporadic Notifications	-	213 (of which 155 were Campylobacter)
Outbreaks	-	12

Other Types of Service Requests (Food Safety only)

<u>Water Disconnections</u>	-	12
<u>Shellfish Requests for Registration Documents</u>	-	these are now administered by Natural Resources Wales on our behalf
<u>Ship Sanitation Certificates</u>	-	0
<u>Export Health Certificates</u>	-	73