Wrexham County Borough Council

Food Service Plan 2012-13
Executive Summary

The Food Safety and Food Standards Service have had a largely successful year in 2012/13 for a number of reasons:

- The service achieved 99% of planned high risk food hygiene and standards inspections, whilst dealing with over 150 new business registrations.

- The National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme continues to be rolled out with over 600 premises now listed on the web site. This has led to sustained improvements in food hygiene standards in local food businesses, with over 90% of food premises in Wrexham scoring ‘3’ or above.

- 54 food handlers were successfully trained to the level 2 Award in ‘Food Safety in Catering’. 19 local food handlers achieved the Level 3 award, including 12 school cooks.

- The horse meat ‘scandal’ at the beginning of 2013 led to a rapid response from enforcement officers following calls for investigation at local meat products premises, and enquiries from the press and general public. No problems were discovered at any premises within Wrexham.

- The service achieved a high level of satisfaction based on the customer care questionnaires returned by local businesses visited by our enforcement officers.

- To improve efficiency and resilience a significant level of partnership working in Food Standards has been undertaken across the region which has attracted local and national attention. By working in partnership we have been able to attract funding from the Food Standards Agency.
SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 AIMS

1. To protect public health from risks which may arise in connection with the consumption of food, and otherwise to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food.

2. To support the headline priorities set out by the FSA for regulation:
   - To provide support and take targeted, proportionate risk based enforcement action, including inspections, to protect food safety and prevent food borne disease.
   - To tackle rogue business and take appropriate measures to safeguard the food supply from adulteration, contamination, fraud and misdescription.
   - To provide appropriate targeted, specific, transparent and robust advice, support and incentives to businesses to maximise compliance with EU based food hygiene regulations and general food law.
   - To provide advice and support to consumers to protect public health and promote healthier lifestyles and consumer choice
   - To provide transparent, robust and consistent approaches to investigating and resolving consumer complaints about food and food business.

3. To maintain fair and equitable trading, to inform consumers and businesses, and encourage honest business.

4. To improve continuously the quality of services through the effective use and enhancement of staff skills and knowledge.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure the health and well-being of the public by promoting and enforcing safe standards of hygiene and food safety in the preparation, manufacture, storage, distribution, handling and sale of food in all relevant food premises in Wrexham County Borough in accordance with the requirements of all relevant food safety legislation.

2. To provide an effective planned inspection and enforcement programme for food premises, livestock and arable holdings and animal feeding stuff premises.

3. To assist, advise and educate all parties in matters relating to food safety and standards, communicable disease control, animal feeding stuffs, fair trading and weights and measures and consumer safety with a view to supporting the provision of quality businesses.
4. To monitor the safety of food on sale to the public, wholesomeness of private drinking water supplies, composition and accuracy of labelling of food and feedings stuffs, by means of a structured sampling programme.

5. To provide and maintain a fail safe and informed trading environment for the residents of Wrexham County Borough and for visitors.

6. To ensure that human food and animal feeding stuffs do not pose health risks and that labelling and compositional standards are complied with.

7. To undertake a planned programme of testing, inspection and verification of weighing and measuring equipment and surveillance of metrological control systems at relevant premises according to risk.

8. To investigate consumer and trader complaints relating to: food, food premises and animal feeding stuffs, weights and measures, fair trading and consumer safety.

9. To investigate cases of communicable disease notified to the Authority.

10. To protect consumers from fraud and trading malpractice.

11. To liaise with other Local Authorities, parties and stakeholders.

12. To promote food and feeding stuff standards.

13. To respond promptly and effectively to food alerts and any threats to the safety of food sold in Wrexham County Borough.

14. To deliver the service we provide in accordance with quality management systems.

1.3 LINKS TO CORPORATE OBJECTIVES, SHARED PRIORITIES AND PLANS

Wrexham County Borough Council is made up of 52 elected Members. It is led by an Executive Board who are supported and held to account by Scrutiny Committees. The Strategic Management Team for the Council is made up of the Chief Executive, three Strategic and Performance Directors and nine Heads of Department. Services are provided and enabled by around 6,400 people in 4,900 full time equivalent posts.

Local Authorities have a duty to promote the economic, social and environmental well being of their local communities and contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom. Each Council is required to develop a community strategy in partnership with other public sector organisations such as police, health, business community and voluntary groups, which sets out long term targets and actions to improve their local area. There are three strategic priorities identified in Wrexham’s Council Plan for 2012 -2016 with the purpose of ensuring Wrexham and its people are supported to fulfil their potential and prosper:
- Economy – Creating a vibrant, diverse and inclusive economy
- People – Raising aspirations, creating confidence and promoting opportunity
- Place – Investing in attractive, safe and inclusive communities

The Council has set a number of outcomes under each of these three strategic priorities, namely:

- **Economy**
  - People want to live, work, learn, visit and invest here
  - Businesses can locate and grow here
  - People can prosper as individuals and in their communities

- **People**
  - All children and young people have positive aspirations, learn and achieve their potential
  - Children and young people are safeguarded, protected and their welfare is promoted
  - People feel, and are, safe and secure
  - All people are enabled to make healthy choices
  - All older people and vulnerable adults are safe and have optimal health, independence and well being
  - Welsh language and culture is promoted and supported

- **Place**
  - Investing in attractive, safe and inclusive communities
  - A housing market that meets people’s needs and aspirations
  - Environmentally responsible
  - Sustainable and attractive communities with a strong cultural identity
  - Well connected

The Food Service can help to contribute to these priorities and outcomes by:

- Regulating and enabling economic vitality
- Supporting local businesses
- Making people safer
- Providing education and training
- Encouraging food businesses to promote healthy options
- Directly affecting the health of people
2. **BACKGROUND**

2.1 **PROFILE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY**

**WREXHAM COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

2.1.1 A total of 47 wards, covering 50,500 hectares of North East Wales 94% of the geographic area is classified as rural by the Welsh Assembly Government. The population is 135,070 (2011 InfoBase Cymru), 52% of which live in the urban areas of Wrexham town and the urban villages.

2.1.2 The number of dwellings on the valuation list in April 2013 was 59,203.

2.1.3 Wrexham is the third largest retail centre in Wales behind Cardiff and Swansea. In recent years the town centre has enjoyed extensive development which had added 250,000 square feet to its shopping area.

2.1.4 There are currently 4530 local businesses, 6.3% of which are in the accommodation and food service sector.

2.1.5 The industrial character of the area has changed significantly as the older heavy industries such as steel, coal and brick-making declined and new sectors took their place. Manufacturing still plays a key role with 22.5% of workers employed in this sector.

2.1.6 Household names such as Kellogg’s and Cadbury’s along with other large food manufacturers have facilities within the County.

2.2 **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

2.2.1 **Appendix A** outlines the Strategic Director/Chief Officer structure for Wrexham County Borough Council.

2.2.2 **Appendix B** outlines the Departmental Management structure.

2.3 **SCOPE OF THE FOOD SERVICE**

2.3.1 Scope of Service Delivery

- Inspection of premises where food is produced or sold to check compliance with Food and Agricultural legislation.
- To receive and process applications for approval/registration of premises e.g major manufacturers and registered animal feedstuff premises.
- Respond to and investigate all complaints relating to food sold, food premises and food poisoning notifications.
- To carry out inspections and to detain or seize unsound and unwholesome food and animal feeding stuffs.
- Undertake food hygiene training and promotional activities to the public and traders.
- Examine and respond to all planning consultations in relation to food premises.
- Provision of advice and guidance to caterers, food handlers etc.
- Carry out a sampling programme of food and feedstuffs for bacteriological and compositional analysis.
- Action notifications of food alerts from the Food Standards Agency (Wales)
- To act as home/originating authority where necessary.

2.4 DEMANDS ON THE FOOD SERVICE

2.4.1 PREMISES PROFILE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Producers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaughterhouses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturers/Processors</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supermarket</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributors (including wholesalers and transporters)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retailers</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant and other caterers</td>
<td>891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials and Articles in contact with food</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1275</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product Specific Approved Premises</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Feeding Stuffs</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Regulation Premises Supplying Food beyond Local Area</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4.2 Service Delivery Points

**Housing and Public Protection Department, Ruthin Road, Wrexham LL13 7TU**

In addition the Department operates an out of hours emergency facility for dealing with emergency incidents out normal working hours. Additionally, pre-planned inspections of premises are performed outside normal working hours.

3. ENFORCEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

In accordance with national direction, resources are targeted towards the most significant hazards and higher risk premises. Generally, this is achieved by employing national inspection rating systems that ensure more frequent inspections to food premises where the hazards are the greatest, standards of compliance poor and confidence in management low. Revision of the Food Law Code of Practice provides scope for the Authority to introduce less thorough ‘verification’ visits in place of full inspections for broadly compliant businesses or those posing less risk. However, the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme demands a thorough inspection in order that the premises rating can be determined fairly, so this approach has not been adopted.

Decisions to institute legal proceedings and to administer ‘simple cautions’ are guided by recommendations put forward by investigating officers in consultation with the Principal Managers for Food Safety or Trading Standards and the Service Manager for Public Protection.
The option of serving Hygiene Improvement Notices, Remedial Action Notices and Hygiene Emergency prohibition Notices is only available for food hygiene enforcement.

The number of Hygiene Improvement Notices served has reduced in the last twelve months (12 served compared with 26 in 2011/12), suggesting a progressive increase in the levels of compliance. Further improvements might be expected over the forthcoming years as businesses are encouraged to take a proactive approach to managing food hygiene in order to receive a favourable rating under the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

The Public Protection Service has recently reviewed its enforcement policy in line with the requirements of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008

In coming to any enforcement decisions, consideration will be given to the following factors:-

a) The seriousness of the offence  
b) The past history of the business  
c) Confidence in management  
d) The consequences of non compliance  
e) The likely effectiveness of various enforcement options  
f) The attitude of the operator/proprietor

The above list is not exhaustive and other factors may be taken into account in the circumstances of a particular case. Before deciding if a prosecution should be taken, consideration will be given to issuing a simple caution in accordance with Home Office Circular 016/2008 if this course of action would be more appropriate or effective.

The choices for action are:-

a) To take no action  
b) To take informal action  
c) To use statutory notices  
d) To use a simple caution  
e) To prosecute

The full version of the Enforcement Policy can be obtained by contacting the Service Manager of the Public Protection Department at:

The Public Protection Service Manager  
Housing and Public Protection Department  
Ruthin Road  
Wrexham  
LL13 7TU  
Tel: 01978 315710
4. SERVICE DELIVERY

4.1.1 Food and Feeding Stuffs Premises Inspections

Premises liable for food and feeding stuffs inspections are risk assessed and the risk assessment category, dictates the frequency and level of inspection they receive.

4.1.2 Premises Profile – Number of Inspections programmed for the year 2013/14

Food Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Group</th>
<th>No of Premises</th>
<th>Due Inspections</th>
<th>Inspections Planned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A - High</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30*</td>
<td>30*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B - Medium</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>181*</td>
<td>181*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrated</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These figure include outstanding visits rolled over from 2012/13 – the shortfall was due to maternity leave and recruitment issues

Agricultural Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Group</th>
<th>Inspection level</th>
<th>Number of premises</th>
<th>Due Inspections</th>
<th>Inspections Planned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arable/General Cropping</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock Non Assured</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock Assured</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>}</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Food Hygiene

Registration of food premises

The Authority is responsible for the statutory registration of food premises under EC Regulation 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs. Where possible, the Food Safety team aims to inspect food premises before they start trading, unless a substantive inspection
has been made following a request for an advisory visit. Where food premises are subject to a change in ownership, the Authority will aim to carry out an inspection within approximately 4 weeks of registration, unless there is continuity in the management of the business, in which case the premises will be inspected at the next programmed inspection.

The Authority aim to ensure that food premises are inspected with a frequency that has regard to the risk associated with those premises. Food premises inspections shall be performed in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice and associated guidance. During the year 2012/13, the food safety team inspected 99% of their planned high risk inspections (Risk Group A to C).

The following table shows the number of premises in each risk group, and the number of inspections due during the forthcoming year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Group</th>
<th>Premises</th>
<th>Inspections Planned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1205</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Alternative enforcement Activity

Alternative enforcement activities will be undertaken on low risk premises (Risk Group E) where appropriate, using a combination of self assessment questionnaires and targeted advice/information at specific trade sectors.

4.3 Food and Feeding Stuffs complaints

The authority’s policy is that it aims to respond to complaints about food and feeding stuffs within set guidelines and procedures including regard to specific investigatory processes.

The level of complaint fell slightly for food safety issues during 2012/13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complaints</th>
<th>2011/12</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Standards</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Safety</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These relate to complaints regarding food that members of the public have purchased which they have considered to be unfit, contaminated, or out of condition.

4.4 Home Authority Principle
The authority has previously adopted the Home Authority Principle and obtained member approval. The authority acts as Home Authority for over 20 food manufacturing premises and as originating authority for 9 food manufacturing premises. Of these, at least 24 supply food throughout the United Kingdom and a number also export food to the EC and beyond. The authority has absorbed home authority work in the areas of food standards and food safety as part of its routine pre-programmed inspections. Larger food enterprises have nominated contact officers for food standards and food safety purposes in order that advice can be readily given in a uniform and consistent manner.

4.4.1 Primary Authority Scheme

As part of the Government’s ‘Better Regulation’ initiative, the Primary Authority Scheme commenced on 6 April 2009. This scheme compliments the Home Authority Principle and will eventually replace it. It allows businesses to form a statutory partnership with a single local authority which will provide robust and reliable advice that other Councils must take into account when carrying out inspections or dealing with non-compliance. The scheme builds on the foundation created by voluntary home and lead authority initiatives but entails a fundamental shift in the nature of the relationship between the regulated and regulator.

During the forthcoming year we will be exploring the possibility (along with the Local Better Regulation Office, now known as the Better Regulation Delivery Office - BRDO) of publicising the benefits of the scheme to local businesses that trade regionally and nationally, and hopefully, enter into a formal Primary Authority partnership with at least one local business.

4.5 Advice to business

The authority publicises the availability of staff, advice leaflets and resources to ensure a uniform and consistent approach to advice is given across the authority’s area. The Public Protection Department produces a newsletter aimed at all businesses, including operators of most of the food businesses throughout the County Borough. This aims to keep businesses up to date with changes in legislation and training opportunities, as well as current hot topics. An information pack for new businesses has been developed giving basic advice and useful contact details for business operators. During the past year, the Food Safety team has produced and distributed a guidance document on cross contamination for local catering establishments, concentrating particularly on the risks of E.coli O157. In the last year, the Food Safety Team responded to over 230 requests for advice from food businesses.

4.6 Food and Feeding Stuffs Inspection Sampling

Food sampling plans are drawn up annually in response to perceived local needs and problems. Sampling leans towards local producers and manufacturers and emerging issues and also take account of any national sampling programmes e.g. Society of Directors of Public Protection Wales, Food and Agricultural Standards Panel and Local Government Regulation Co-ordinated surveys. During the last
year, we have sampled local producers of cooked meat products and dairy products, as well as sampling a proportion of local retailers looking at fresh cut fruit. Samples that show up the presence of pathogens are followed up with a visit to the premises in order to ascertain where a problem may have occurred, and a subsequent re-sample to ensure improvements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Samples Planned</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Standards</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Standards</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Safety</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The authority has appointed the following for the purposes of foods and feeding stuffs analysis:

Public Analysts: Eurofins Laboratories Ltd, Woodthorne, Wergs Road, Wolverhampton WV6 8TQ and;

HPA Laboratory, Royal Preston Hospital, Sharoe Green Lane North, Preston.

4.7 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Diseases

All cases of Food Poisoning or Suspected Food Poisoning are investigated; contact is made either by personal visit, telephone or postal questionnaire.

The Authority has formally adopted a Plan for Handling Outbreaks of Food Poisoning together with partner organisations.

Notifications 2010 - 2012 were as follows, showing a fairly stable picture, although there was an increase in the numbers of cryptosporidium notifications in 2012, which mirrored a peak in many other parts of the UK during autumn 2012. It is not yet understood why this peak may have occurred.

In line with national statistics, the majority of reported cases were of campylobacter infection. This is often associated with under-cooked meat (especially poultry). Most cases are thought to be sporadic and the routes of transmission appear unclear, although it is thought many cases are linked to domestic preparation of food.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campylobacter</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmonella</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E coli O157</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cryptosporidium</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giardiasis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Food Poisoning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two officers have taken part in an all Wales training programme in Communicable Disease Control, and all officers attended a workshop event looking at lessons learned from previous outbreaks.

4.8 **Food Safety Alerts**

The Food Standards Agency Incidents Branch deals with the environmental contamination incidents with the potential to affect the food chain. Formed in 2007 the Agency's incident branch provides advice and support to local authorities on incidents. It produces ‘Product Withdrawal Information Notices’ or ‘Product Recall Information Notices’ to let Local Authorities and consumers know about problems associated with food. In some cases a ‘Food Alert For Action’ is issued. This provides local authorities with details of specific action to be taken on behalf of consumers.

A Product Withdrawal Information Notice or Product Recall Information Notice is issued where a solution to the problem has been put in place – the product has been, or is being, withdrawn from sale or recalled from consumers.

Details of the latest product withdrawals and recalls can be found on the web site of the Food Standards Agency.

5. **LIAISON WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

The authority has in place arrangements to ensure that enforcement action is consistent with those of neighbouring local authorities, and is represented on the Society of Directors North Wales Technical Panels, dealing with Food Safety and Communicable Disease, Food and Agricultural Standards issues.

The authority is an active member of the Food and Agricultural Standards Panel. This panel ensures that the activities undertaken are consistent and compliant with current guidelines.

6. **FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION**

6.1 **Food Hygiene Courses**

During 2012-13 the following courses were delivered by the Food Safety Section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>No. of courses</th>
<th>Total No. of Candidates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Food Hygiene (Level 2)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Food Hygiene (Level 3)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of candidates at Level 2 has dropped slightly over the last 12 months, and fewer courses are now being offered. This may be due to the increase in
charges for such courses, or that businesses are cutting training budgets in the present economic climate. Officers also undertake informal talks at local schools on food hygiene issues, primarily to Food Technology pupils.

6.2 Website Information (www.wrexham.gov.uk and follow the links to Food Safety)

The information available on Food Safety and Standards matters includes advice on operating a new business and a number of frequently asked questions.

It is possible to report a food issue, book a food hygiene course and register a food premises 'on-line'.

A website service introduced in November 2006 allowed members of the public to see the results of recent food hygiene inspections carried out in the borough in the form of a hygiene star rating. At the time of inspection, businesses are assessed against a range of parameters, including their compliance with food hygiene legislation, and the officer's assessment of their confidence in the management of the business.

This assessment led to an overall score, which was used to calculate the star rating in the scheme which was known generally as "Scores on the Doors".

During the last two years, the Food Standards Agency has worked towards developing a national scheme which it launched, in Wales, in the Autumn of 2010. All 22 Welsh Authorities agreed to implement this national scheme, allowing customers to examine the food hygiene ratings of premises on line. It also provides for the display of certificates and stickers at the premises, indicating the rating of the premises from 0 to 5. A Bill is currently going through Welsh Government which will make it mandatory for businesses to display their hygiene score. This should come into force in November 2013.

6.3 Nutrition Strategy for Wales

6.3.1 This Authority is committed to supporting the Nutrition Strategy for Wales, the Housing and Public Protection Department will carry out and support various activities to this end.
6.4 Proactive initiatives planned for this year include:

**Food Hygiene**

- Following the Pennington Report of 2009, there has been a change in emphasis in terms of enforcement action taken by officers within the Department, with an increase in formal notices being served and prosecutions initiated. Poorer performing premises have been identified, and it is proposed to concentrate resources on those premises in an attempt to bring about improvements, or take action against those unwilling to comply. There has been an increase in the number of re-visits undertaken to businesses following inspection, in an attempt to seek compliance.

- An action plan was drawn up following the Pennington Report and a 'Pennington Co-ordination Group' was set up involving several Departments across the Local Authority, looking at ways of implementing the recommendations made in the report. Members have been advised previously about the actions of this group which continues to meet and make improvements based on the report. In addition, an internal audit was undertaken by the Authority to check on progress against the recommendations. A further action plan was drawn up and recommendations made which have been acted upon. Some internal training has been carried out in the last year, looking at the way the Local Authority procures its food.

- The national food hygiene rating scheme will continue to be rolled out, and any concerns brought to the attention of the Food Standards Agency. A bill has passed through the Welsh Government which will make the display of food hygiene ratings mandatory. It is expected that this will become law in November 2013. This could have a big impact on the work of the food safety team. Business operators having their rating displayed may make them more conscious of their level of compliance, and be requesting re-scores before the law comes into force. This may well mean resources being diverted away from programmed inspections to satisfy the demand of those business operators wanting an improved score. Following the introduction of the Act, food business operators will have to pay for a re-rating inspection (thought to be £150), so it will be in their interest to request a re-score before November.

- Business operators failing to display their rating will be subject to a fixed penalty of £200, with a reduction for early payment.

- Level 2 and Level 3 food hygiene courses will be advertised to food businesses throughout the borough and on the Wrexham Council web site.

- The possibility of closer collaborative working with Flintshire County Council is being actively explored.

- The Department will actively pursue forming a Primary Authority partnership with a local food business.
The Department is actively pursuing the provision of food hygiene training for our Chinese catering outlets. It is hoped to engage a trainer capable of delivering the training in their own language.

Food standards:

The Authority will be participating in a number of Food Standards Surveys – some of which are funded by the Food Standards Agency.

- PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) – Welsh lamb and beef
- Cheese substitution
- Nut allergens
- Mycotoxins in cereal

The Service will be working with the Procurement Section of the Authority and will be taking samples from a range of schools and other Council premises focusing on meat products for species contamination, following the horse meat scandal earlier in the year.

6.5 Other Activities

Talks will be provided to local organisations upon request. Press releases will be issued on relevant seasonal food safety topics.

7. RESOURCES

A breakdown of resources allocated to the component parts of the service, as detailed above, has not been carried out. *reword**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>20013/2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Safety</td>
<td>£281,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Agricultural Standards</td>
<td>£75,045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2 Staffing Allocation (full-time equivalents)
7.3 **Staff Development Plan**

The Authority has implemented an appraisal procedure. This involves two review meetings annually whereby past, present and future performance is reviewed and assessed, and areas for improvement identified. The authority has attained the externally assessed Investors in People standard.

8. **REVIEW**

8.1 **Review against the Service Plan**

Departmental Activity plans which include aspects of the food service plan are reviewed on a quarterly basis by the senior managers of the Department. This includes regular monitoring of the plan.

During the year 2012/13, the Department completed 99% of its high risk food hygiene and food standards inspections. Three visits to high risk establishments were left outstanding at the end of the twelve month period. This was due to the snow affecting many parts of the county in the last week of March, when premises were closed or officers unable to reach them.

Inspections to Category D premises (i.e. those posing less of a risk) where reduced to 55% completed due to maternity leave.

8.2 **Identification of any variance from the service plan**

By monitoring the service delivery on a regular basis it is possible to identify shortfalls or variation in the level of services being applied, these can be actioned almost immediately, which may necessitate an audit to assess the extent and reason for such variations. Alternatively, if necessary, dependent upon the complexity and extent of the variance, a management review can be called in addition to the regular monitoring programme.

8.3 **Areas of improvement**

The Management review will recommend and document any areas of improvement for the service, these can either be actioned immediately if necessary, or can be built into future annual service plans.
8.4 **Review of some of the investigations that took place in the year 2012/2013**

**Food Hygiene**

**Fast Food Takeaway**

Following an inspection of a fast food takeaway business, the premises were deemed to be so dirty and untidy as to warrant immediate closure. The owners co-operated with the officer and agreed to close voluntarily to allow them to undertake a deep clean of the premises. A revisit to the premises the following day revealed a considerable improvement and the premises were allowed to re-open.

**Butcher’s shop**

An inspection of a butcher’s shop revealed the butcher was using the same vacuum packing machine to pack raw and cooked meats. Following the Pennington report into the E.coli outbreak in South Wales, it was suggested that this could not be considered to be a safe practice, and should not be allowed. An *emergency prohibition notice* was served on the Food Business Operator compelling him to cease immediately the use of the vacuum packing machine for cooked meats. This was complied with immediately as the vacuum packer was removed from the premises. **explain no longer vac pack**

**Horse Meat**

In January 2013, news broke that some beef products, particularly beef burgers, in Ireland had been found to contain varying levels of horse DNA following analysis. Further tests, carried out throughout the UK found more evidence of contamination, and the Food Standards Agency initiated a UK wide programme of sampling, looking specifically at food authenticity. It suggested that the problem did not appear to have food safety implications, although there was some concern around the presence of veterinary residues in horse meat. Major retailers and manufacturers also undertook a sampling programme, and more evidence came to light of contamination of a variety of beef based products such as meatballs and lasagne. These products were immediately withdrawn from sale.

As we have a number of manufacturers within Wrexham who use beef in their products, we were asked by the Food Standards Agency to visit each of these premises, in order to establish and confirm full traceability, and report back our findings. Some of these businesses had also undertaken their own authentication analysis. Visits were undertaken in a timely manner, and no problems of provenance were discovered.

**Food Standards**

**North Wales Survey into Analogue cheese from catering establishments**

A survey took place across the 6 North Wales Authorities into cheese substitution. Due to the current economic crisis there appears to have been an influx of substitution of “cheese” in the market place, whilst there is no issue with cheese substitute quite a
number of suppliers are not labelling their products correctly and users are unaware that the cheese substitute product is actually not wholly cheese.
Aim of survey was to sample cheese particularly grated cheese being sold via restaurants, cafes and pizza takeaways to establish if products are genuine cheese.
A total of 5 samples were obtained from Wrexham, and a total of 30 samples were obtained across North Wales, and submitted for analysis.
A grant had been obtained from the Food Standards Agency to cover the cost of the analysis.

**North Wales Survey into Honey Adulteration**

A survey took place across the 6 North Wales Authorities into honey adulteration. The survey was to investigate whether honey has been adulterated with syrup.
There have been recent cases of honey adulteration, such as products being found as syrup based products rather than the claimed honey and imported honey being passed off as being produced locally.
A total of 4 samples were obtained from Wrexham, and a total of 24 samples were obtained across North Wales, and submitted for analysis. A problem had been detected with one sample which is now being investigated. A grant had been obtained from the Food Standards Agency to cover the cost of the analysis.

**North Wales Survey into olive oil authenticity**

A survey was organised by the North Wales Food and Metrology Panel into olive oil authenticity.
There has been a high level of media speculation recently that fraudulent olive oil is for sale in the UK.
The olive oil obtained for this survey will be tested to determine whether they do contain olive oil or extra virgin olive oil, as labelled. It will also be tested to establish whether there is adulteration with other oils or if it is fake olive oil.
A total of 2 samples were obtained from Wrexham, and a total of 12 samples were obtained across North Wales, and submitted for analysis.
A grant had been obtained from the Food Standards Agency to cover the cost of the analysis, and they also gave £30 per sample to reimburse the cost of sampling.

**North Wales Survey into fruit juice adulteration.**

A survey was organised by the North Wales Food and Metrology Panel into fruit juice adulteration. The survey was to investigate whether fruit juice had been adulterated with water.

There have been reports of fruit juice adulteration. Cases are reported of water, acids or colouring being added. Reports have also been made of mandarin or tangerine juice being added to orange juice to improve colour. The Fruit Juice and Fruit Nectar (Wales) Regulations 2003 require a clear distinction between juice obtained directly from fruit and that obtained by the reconstitution of concentrated juice. This is achieved by the use of the product name ‘fruit juice' when it has been produced directly from fruit. When a
reconstituted concentrate is used the product name will be 'fruit juice from concentrate'. The intention is to draw the attention of the consumer to the wording 'from concentrate' thereby highlighting the method of production of the product.

A total of 3 samples were obtained from Wrexham, and a total of 18 samples were obtained across North Wales, and submitted for analysis. 4 failures were detected. A grant had been obtained from the Food Standards Agency to cover the cost of the analysis, and they also gave £30 per sample to reimburse the cost of sampling.

North Wales Survey into Allergens in Take Away Meals

A survey was organised by the North Wales Food and Metrology Panel into allergens in take away meals. Allergic reactions to ingredients in take away food are relatively common and can have devastating consequences. Many catering establishment are well aware of the risks and have taken steps to control to prevent allergen contamination of take away meals. However there is evidence that in many premises there is a poor understanding of the risks and lack of staff training, which may result in inappropriate use of ingredients, cross contamination of foods with allergenic ingredients.

The survey method was to purchaser meals which were described as peanut and almond free, and submit for analysis for the said ingredients. A total of 3 samples were obtained from Wrexham, and a total of 18 samples were obtained across North Wales, and submitted for analysis, 4 failures were detected. One of the samples was found to contain peanut protein, and is currently being formally investigated.

A grant had been obtained from the Food Standards Agency to cover the cost of the analysis, and they also gave £30 per sample to reimburse the cost of sampling.

UKFSS Net software

Since April 2011 all food and feed standard sampling has been submitted using the new UKFSS software which provides for seamless integration with the Department’s Public Analyst.

Sample results are transferred to the UKFSS website to provide the Food Standards Agency with an overall view of sampling activity in the UK. As a local authority we are able to interrogate the website database for not only our own samples/project results but also information provided by other local authorities. This database assists us in targeting sampling to possible problem areas by looking at national or regional trends.