

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 12

meeting date: THURSDAY, 7 JUNE 2018
title: FOOD HYGIENE INTERVENTION PLAN 2018/2019
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: HEATHER COAR HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider and approve the Ribble Valley Borough Council's Food Hygiene Intervention Plan 2018/2019.
- 1.2 The Council's vision developed with the Ribble Valley Strategic Partnership states that we aim to ensure Ribble Valley will be "an area with an exceptional environment and quality of life for all; sustained by vital and vibrant market towns and villages acting as thriving service centres meeting the needs of residents, businesses and visitors". This function of Environmental Health should be recognised as making an important contribution to the Council delivering this vision.
- 1.3 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
- Priority 1. To ensure a well-managed Council, providing efficient services based on identified customer needs; by creating income generation through the charging for rescore revisits.
 - Priority 2. To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley; by supporting food businesses and food manufacturers with advice and technical guidance.
 - Priority 3. To help make people's lives safer and healthier; by striving to ensure that food businesses are safe and compliant for residents, and achieve national food hygiene rating of at least 3 and above.
 - Other Considerations – This document meets the Food Standards Agency's food law enforcement framework and requirement to produce an annual service plan complying with the national template.
- 1.4 The content of this document will be a principal constituent of any future Ribble Valley Borough Council Environmental Health Service Plan with the items contained within the action plan being incorporated accordingly.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In October 2000, the Food Standards Agency published initial detailed guidance to local authorities entitled "A Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement". Subsequent guidance continues to require that local authorities produce a Food Hygiene Intervention Programme (Plan) relating to food law enforcement and set out how the local authority will meet their statutory obligations.
- 2.2 The latest revision of the Food Safety Act Code of Practice titled 'Food Law Code of Practice (England)' was released in April 2017. This guidance consolidates and updates previous food control guidance to reflect changes in National and European Union Food Directives and Regulations. Local Authorities are required to implement and operate in accordance with this guidance.

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 Attached as an Appendix to this report is a recently completed annual Food Hygiene Intervention Plan in relation to Ribble Valley Borough Council. In particular to Section 7 which details performance figures for 2017-18.

3.2 The inspection figures for 2017-18 below were set against the following challenges:

- There was a lengthy food safety investigation following a Lancashire wide raw cows drinking milk survey. All four of the raw drinking milk suppliers in the Ribble Valley were found to have failed to produce a product which complied with the current food safety criteria. Two of the premises were linked to illness in the community, and disease causing bacteria were isolated in the milk produced at three of the establishments.
- For a considerable part of the year a part time member of the Food Safety team was redeployed to undertake an urgent swimming pool safety campaign following local knowledge which revealed that many of the premises did not comply with the current guidance.

Year Summary 2017/18:

- 302 service requests (an increase of 40% from 2016-17) were recorded, of which 93% were actioned within the target response time of 2 working days.
- 77 confirmed cases of infectious diseases were investigated in relation to food-borne organisms.
- 83 food samples were submitted for microbiological examination. This is three times more sampling than was carried out in the previous year, and the Authority had the highest sampling activity out of the 14 Lancashire Authorities.
- 99% of the highest risk category of food businesses (A-D), including approved manufacturers were inspected. Out of a programme of 374 interventions, 371 were carried out.
- Premises which were found to be 'broadly compliant' increased slightly to 95%.
- 13% of premises were awarded an improved hygiene rating, and 7% received a lower hygiene rating.
- Of the visits carried out by the Food Safety team 57% are programmed through the national food hygiene inspection regime dictated by the Food Standards Agency. In addition to these visits, the team carried out an additional 285 visits, making a combined total of 656 visits. These additional visits consisted of sampling visits, compliance revisits, advice visits, complaint visits and rescore revisits.
- The percentage of premises inspected, and the high level of compliance make it highly unlikely that this Authority will be selected for audit by the Food Standards Agency.

3.3 We have received no complaints against the delivery of the service.

3.4 On 1 June 2011, the National 'Food Hygiene Rating Scheme' was successfully introduced within the borough. The scheme has been well received and has been an undoubted success. The ratings for food premises in Ribble Valley continue to improve and are as follows, Risk Rating 5 being best:

Risk Rating 5: 477, **4:** 56, **3:** 16, **2:** 8, **1:** 2, and **0:** 1

3.5 Effort and resource will continue to be focused on the lowest 3 categories with the purpose to raise these premises to achieve at least 'broad compliance' and a rating

of at least 3. Poor performing premises will be reviewed by Officers at their monthly section meeting and targeted for enhanced attention, and possibly enforcement action.

3.6 A copy of the Food Hygiene Intervention Programme will also be placed on the Ribble Valley Borough Council website for reference purposes in the 'Environmental Health' Section.

3.7 It is believed to be appropriate for the programme to be submitted to the relevant Members' forum for approval to ensure local transparency and accountability.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – There are no immediate implications but Committee is asked to recognise the ongoing demands on the service.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – There are no environmental or legal implications. Failure to provide this document contravenes The Food Standards Agency requirements and could result in an audit of the service. This is also an essential performance management and review document.
- Political – This document confirms the Council's intended service provision in relation to this important statutory function.
- Reputation – This document meets this Council's obligations in relation to producing an obligatory annual Food Safety Service Plan in accordance with national framework.
- Equality & Diversity – N/A.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Approve the Ribble Valley Borough Council Food Hygiene Intervention Plan 2018/19 for implementation in the current financial year.

5.2 Note the satisfactory performance for the year 2017-18.

5.3 Reconfirm the continuing priority of food premises inspection for Environmental Health service provision.

HEATHER COAR
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MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for Heather Coar, extension 4466.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement - July 2004
2. 'Food Law' Code of Practice (England) – April 2017.
3. 'Food Law Practice Guidance (England) – November 2017.



Food Hygiene Intervention Plan 2018/19

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SECTION

**FOOD HYGIENE INTERVENTION PLAN
2018/19**

May 2018

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1.0 Service Aims and Objectives

1.1 Aims and Objectives

Service Aims

- To respond promptly and courteously.
- Be accessible, open and fair.
- Be professional & proportionate
- Provide quality services.

Service Objectives

- Ensure the safe and hygienic production, storage, distribution and sale of food and drink through the enforcement of legislation, the provision of advice and information to consumers and the operators of food businesses and the co-ordination of training to food businesses and other employees by:
 - undertaking an annual programme of food hygiene inspections and enforcement in accordance with statutory requirements, relevant Codes of Practice and guidance;
 - supporting the annual inspection programme with an annual microbiological food sampling programme;
 - investigating complaints within service standards and to take appropriate action in accordance with relevant Codes of Practice and Guidance;
 - acting as "home authority" to any food businesses originating with the borough of Ribble Valley and to carry out home authority enquiries referred by other agencies; and
 - complementing the annual inspection programme with targeted promotional advice and educational initiatives together with providing information and advice on food safety to food businesses and consumers.

1.2 Context - The Council's Vision

Council's vision developed with the Ribble Valley Strategic Partnership states that: **"Ribble Valley will be an area with an exceptional environment and quality of life for all; sustained by vital and vibrant market towns and villages acting as thriving service centres meeting the needs of residents, business and visitors."**

The Council's overarching corporate priority is **'to ensure a well-managed Council providing efficient services based on identified customer needs'**.

Environmental Health activity is driven by 3 of the 4 Council's ambitions, namely:

- **To ensure a well-managed Council providing efficient services based on identified customer needs,**
- **To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley,**
- **To help make people's lives safer and healthier.**

From these ambitions, the Council's Corporate Strategy has identified a number of objectives to be delivered through the Council's supporting Action Plan.

Along with these key corporate documents, it is important that the services are delivered in a manner that not only protects but provides satisfaction to the public. Therefore it is an integral element of all the services delivered that they are done so efficiently and effectively, by appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

As a frontline council service, environmental health services commit to treat all customers fairly, with respect and professionalism regardless of gender, race, nationality or ethnicity, age, religion or belief, disability or sexual orientation.

KEY OBJECTIVES AND POLICY STATEMENTS

Links to Sustainable Community Strategy

- **To help make people’s lives safer and healthier.**

- **To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley.**
- **To support the regeneration of Market Towns as sustainable service centres**
- **Promote local produce and local employment opportunities**

- **Health and Wellbeing Partnership**

- **To seek continuous improvement**
- **To treat everyone equally and ensure access to services is available to all**

Specific Food Safety Ambitions

to focus resources to achieve Food Standards Agency inspection targets

Support & complement the National Food Standards Agency targets to reduce gastroenteritis in the community

To encourage the adoption of healthy lifestyles in the local community

- Service Committee Policies – Health & Housing Committee:**
- **To protect and where possible improve the environment and the general public health of the community, by taking all reasonable measures available;**
 - **To ensure that all premises where food is manufactured or sold comply with the public health legal requirements; and**
 - **To ensure that all other eligible organisations and establishments comply with the relevant public health requirements.**

 - **The Council is committed to providing technical support to new and existing food businesses.**

 - **Health Prevention Strategy:**
 - **To promote public awareness and understanding of the importance of good food hygiene through appropriate media channels.**
 - **To investigate infectious diseases and outbreaks and prevent the further transmission in the community.**

 - **e.Government:**
 - **To develop greater provision of information and service through this media in line with Corporate Policy.**

1.3 Links to annual 'Corporate Strategy'

The Council produces an annual Corporate Strategy.

This strategy contains key summary service information, performance information and includes key actions for the forthcoming year. This year's Corporate Strategy specifically refers to Food Safety in the key actions and the ambition to seek to improve Ribble Valley Food businesses to a food hygiene rating of 3 and above.

1.3.1 Service Development History

As part of the recommended food enforcement 'quality control' measures and as part of an adopted Lancashire authority initiative, a periodic inter authority audit is undertaken of our food enforcement systems by a food officers from a neighbouring Council. This is planned for November 2018.

Detailed individual Service Plans for Food Safety and Health and Safety are prepared on an annual basis. A General Environmental Health Service plan is proposed to cover the other functions carried out by this team.

These plans will complement the corporate vision, values and objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy.

2.0 Background

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Ribble Valley Borough is situated in North East Lancashire, and with an area of 226 sq miles is the largest geographical district in the County. The Borough Council is one of 12 District Councils, 1 County Council and 2 Unitary Authorities within the County of Lancashire. Within the borough, some functions relating to food safety are the responsibility of Lancashire County Council eg Trading Standards and Food Standards Inspections.

Over 70% of the borough is in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a clear reflection of the landscape quality of the area.

The borough has a population of approx. 58,826 (2016), with Clitheroe, the main administrative centre having 15,000 inhabitants. Clitheroe lies at the heart of the borough, whilst Longridge, the other main town, lies in the West. Longridge has a population of 7,724. The remainder of the area is mainly rural with a number of villages ranging in size from large villages such as Whalley, Sabden and Chatburn through to small hamlets such as Great Mitton and Paythorne.

The borough has a mixed economy, with good employment opportunities and a consistently low rate of unemployment. Given the rural nature of the area it is not surprising that agriculture is a primary employer through the District. Large manufacturing activity is represented by major national and multi-national companies such as Hanson Cement, Tarmac, Johnson Matthey, Ultraframe, 3M, and British Aerospace Systems, amongst others.

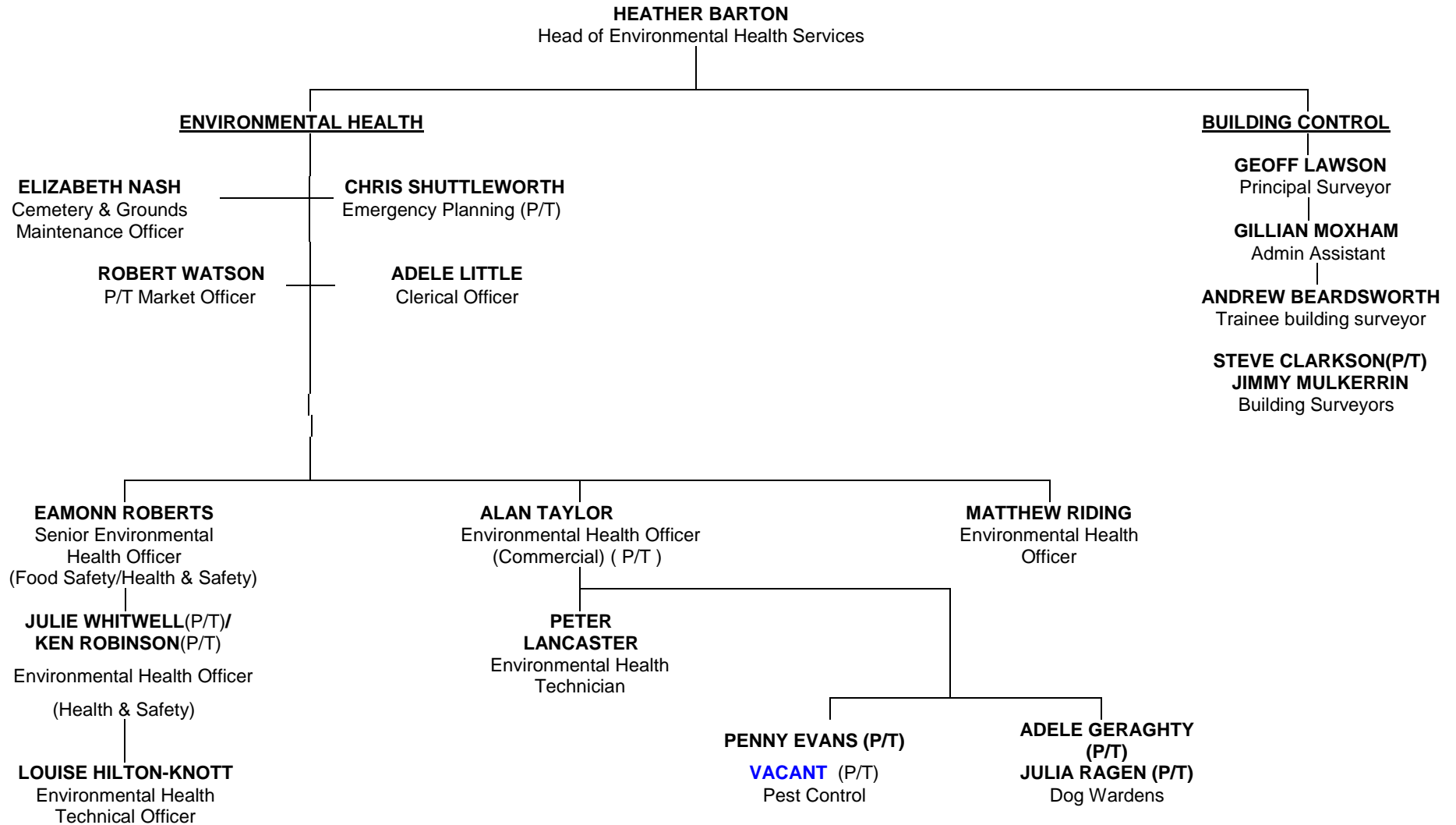
The Ribble Valley has excellent communications which open up the area to the rest of the country. The A59 trunk road, a main artery from the west coast through to the east, dissects the borough, and links to the M6. Main line rail services are available from Preston, which is only 40 minutes from Clitheroe. In addition, Manchester Airport is only 50 minutes away from Clitheroe and provides links to over 200 destinations worldwide.

POLITICAL MAKE-UP OF THE BOROUGH

40 Local District Councillors
33 Parish Councils (and 7 Parish Meetings)
2 Town Councils
1 Member of Parliament

2. Service Structure

2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE STRUCTURE



Political Arrangements	Food Safety falls under the terms of reference of the Health & Housing Committee. The Food Hygiene Intervention Plan is presented to the Council's Health & Housing Committee for approval and adoption.		
Provision for Specialist Services	Food Analytical Services	Lancashire County Scientific Laboratory (Public Analyst Services), Preston plus specialist service providers as necessary	
	Food Examiner Health Authority	Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Laboratory, York. East Lancashire NHS Clinical Commissioning Group CHP/DPH – Dr Nicola Schinaia, Director of Public Health, Public Health England	
	LA Sector Enforcement Guidance	Local Government Regulation (LGR)	
2.3 The Scope of the Environmental Health Section's Food Service	As a Borough Council the Authority is responsible for the full range of food hygiene duties under Regulation(EC) 178/2002 and The General Food Regulations 2004.		
	Food Standards and Animal Feed Products are the responsibility of the Lancashire County Council Trading Standards Division.		
	Within the Chief Executives Department, the Environmental Health Section also delivers the following services alongside food safety.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety/Smokefree Workplace • Local Authority Air Pollution Control (LAAPC/IPPC) • Air Quality Control & Review • Investigation of Nuisance Complaints • Management of Clitheroe Market • Management of Clitheroe Cemetery • Private water supply regulation • Infectious Disease Notifications • Pest Control & Dog Warden Service • Housing Standards • Animal Welfare Licensing • Emergency Planning • Building Control • Licensing (beauty therapies, animal breeding and boarding, Zoo licensing, caravan sites,) 		
2.4 Service Delivery Points	Chief Executive's Department Council Offices Church Walk CLITHEROE Lancashire BB7 2RA E-mail environmental.health@ribblevalley.gov.uk	☎ (01200) 425111 (switchboard) ☎ (01200) 414464 (direct) Fax: (01200) 414487 Web Site: www.ribblevalley.gov.uk Opening Hours: 08.45 – 17.00 Mon – Fri	Out of Hours: Emergency Service available by contacting 01200 444448

2.5 Demands on the Environmental Health Section

There are ever increasing service demands on the Environmental Health team in relation to the issue of delivering health and safety enforcement including event safety, the cleaner environment agenda, animal welfare, nuisance complaints, housing standards enforcement, private water supply regulation, industrial air quality regulation, public health, emergency planning, safe & green building construction and generally protecting the public health of the local community.

In relation to Food Safety, the area contains a mix of manufacturing, retail and catering premises. Catering and retail are the dominant sectors within this mix. The businesses are predominantly small to medium sized establishments.

The borough has a normal cross-section of food businesses but **has a significant and much higher than average number of 'approved' premises**, the majority being on-farm dairies, which are by their nature relatively high risk, complex and resource intensive. **The Food Standards Agency 'Approved Premises' Audit undertaken in January 2015 identified this as a material factor that needs to be emphasised and recognised in relation to ensuring sufficient regulatory resource.**

		Number of Premises (as at 01/04/2018)
	Total number of Food Premises (Total)	721
	Categories A-	1
	Category B	31
	Categories C	113
	Categories D	300
	Categories E	254
	Unrated (excluding approved premises)	22
	<u>Breakdown of Premises usage.</u>	
	Producers	13
	Manufacturers/Packers	35
	Distributors	17
	Supermarkets	9
	Small Retailers	113
	Retailers other	31
	Restaurants/café/canteen	119
	Hotel/ Guest House	37
	Pub/ Club	111
	Takeaway	54
	Caring Premises	65
	School/College	51
	Mobile caterer	22
	Restaurants and other caterers	44
2.6	Enforcement Policies	
	Corporate adoption of the Enforcement Concordat – 2000	
	Food Safety Enforcement Policy (Revised January 2011)	
	General Environmental Health Enforcement Policy (Revised June 2005)	

3.0 Service Delivery

3.1 Food Premises Inspections

It is Ribble Valley Borough Council's policy to carry out programmed inspections in accordance with both the minimum inspection frequencies specified in the Food Standards Agency 'Food Law' Code of Practice (England) (April 2017) and as stipulated in Food Law Practice Guidance (England) [November 2018] .

Premise Profile:

	Programmed Number of Inspections Required During the Year (01/04/17 – 31/03/18)
Category A	2
Category B	31
Category C	82
Category D	115
Category E	82 #
Non Rated/Overdue	22

'Approved' Premises *19
 (* included in above)

252 to visit

Cat 'E' premises to be dealt with by Alternative Inspection Strategy

Estimated number of revisits: 100
Estimated number of officer hours for these visits
 (including management and administration): **1688**

Local areas of targeted inspection:
Approved Premises - On-Farm Dairies and Milk Products Plants (14) } Included in
Approved Premises - Meat Product/preparations (5) } the above
Estimated number of Officer hours for these targeted visits: (150)}

Local Performance Indicator: **100% High Risk food premises inspection carried out**
100% Other food premises inspections carried out

3.2 Food Complaints/Service Requests	<p>It is the policy of Ribble Valley Borough Council to give a first response within 2 working days to all food and food premises complaints/service requests. The 2017/18 performance target was to respond to 90% within 48 hours. <i>In 2017/18, we actually responded to 93% of 302 (40% increase from 2016-17) food related service requests within 48 hours.</i></p>
	<p>Estimated number of food complaints/service requests: 264 (Average over 5 years) <i>Estimated number of Officer hours:</i> 400</p>
3.3 Home Authority Principle	<p>Ribble Valley Borough Council subscribes to the current Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) Primary Authority Principle. The Authority has not been approached by any local companies. <i>Estimated resources spent on Primary Authority Work:</i> 0</p>
3.4 Advice to Business	<p>The Authority has a policy of offering advice to any business which has trading premises within our area.</p> <p>Planning/Building Control consultation responses, licensing enquiries and property searches: 100 (approx.) <i>Approximate officer hours:</i> 125</p> <p>Estimated number of advisory visits: 30 <i>Approximate number of Officer hours:</i> 45</p> <p>Approximate number of food related enquiries involving significant work: 25 <i>Approximated number of Officer hours on general customer advice:</i> 50</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total: 275</p>
3.5 Food Sampling and Inspection	<p>The general policy of Ribble Valley Borough Council is to sample food and drink, supplied, produced and sold within the borough, in accordance with a planned sampling programme, to assess its safety and quality and where necessary, in response to food complaints/investigations. Where resources allow samples will be taken as part of national or regional surveys</p> <p><i>Estimated number of Officer hours to be devoted to food sampling and inspection:</i> 175 Estimated number of complaint samples which will be submitted for examination/analysis: 0 Estimated number of surrender visits: 0 <i>Estimated number of hours on surrender visits:</i> 0</p> <p>All formal food samples are submitted to The Lancashire County Public Analyst for compositional analysis or to Food Water and Environmental Microbiology Service York, for microbiological examination.</p>

3.6 Control of Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease	Average number of notifications of gastrointestinal disease:	100
	Average number of outbreaks:	5
	<i>Estimated number of Officer hours to be devoted to food related infectious disease investigation and control: (total outbreak investigation estimated 200 Hours)</i>	300
3.7 Food Safety Incidents	It is the policy of Ribble Valley Borough Council to comply with Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice (issued March 2017) and the associated Food Law Practice Guidance (issued November 2017) in relation to the handling of Food Hazard Warnings and Food Safety Incidents.	
	Estimated number of Food Hazard Warnings:	50
	<i>Estimated number of Officer hours to be devoted to the handling of Food Hazard Warnings:</i>	10
3.8 Liaison with other Organisations	The Authority participates in the following liaison groups related to food safety issues in order to ensure that enforcement action taken within the Borough of Ribble Valley is consistent with those of neighbouring local authorities:	
	• Lancashire Chief Environmental Health Officers	6
	• Food Officer Sub-Group (FOG) }	24
	• FOG/Public Health Laboratory Service Liaison Group	0
	• East Lancashire Microbiological Forum	0
	• United Utilities (North West Water) Liaison Meeting	5
	<i>Estimated number of Officer hours devoted to liaison activities:</i>	35
3.9 Food Safety Promotion	The Authority will seek to be involved in promotional/training activities in relation to food safety:	
	• 2018 Food Safety Week	
	• Food Hygiene Courses directed to & normally undertaken by local training colleges	
	<i>Estimated number of Officer hours devoted to Health Promotion</i>	20

3.10 Food Safety Training for Officers	It is Required under the current Food Law Code of Practice, that Enforcement Officers achieve a minimum of 20 hours of training per officer each year. 10 hours must be on Food safety topics. The remaining 10 hours can be on general enforcement skills. Training is provided to address needs identified within the officer annual appraisal system and Regulator Development Needs Assessments.(RDNA)	80
3.11 Food Safety Management	<i>Estimated number of hours on Food Safety Management and administration</i>	200
3.12	Total estimated officer hours required to deliver Food Safety function:	3184 (1.9 FTE)

4.0 Resources

4.1 Financial Allocation

The Food Safety Service financial costs are contained within the main "Environmental Health Services" cost centre. This cost also contains the majority of costs relating to the provision of the Environmental Health Service eg Health & Safety, LAAPC, Complaint Service requests, animal welfare etc.

The individual service costs have been partially disaggregated. This has been established by an estimation of officer time spent undertaking food safety work.

The overall expenditure for the Environmental Health Service cost centre over the previous year and forward budget for 2017/18 is as follows. These figures also include income and expenditure related to Enforcement and capital finance costs.

Environmental Health	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Estimate
Employee Expenditure	0	0
Premises Expenditure	17,213	17,330
Transport Related	4,073	4,720
Supplies & Services	23,561	22,710
Third Party Payments	3,865	4,380
Support Services	373,034	388,470
Capital Financing	4,270	4,270
Other Grants & Reimbursements	-772	-1,020
Customer & Client Receipts	-38,637	-46,010
NET SERVICE COSTS	386,607	394,850

Food Safety/ID Costs	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Estimate
Supplies & Services	1,547	1,576
Support Services	61,317	62,078
Capital Financing	0	0
Total Expenditure	62,864	63,654
Total Income	0	0
NET SERVICE COSTS	62,864	63,654

4.2 Staffing Allocation

The Environmental Health Section is responsible for the delivery of a range of services in addition to food safety, namely:

- Nuisance Complaint Investigation (commercial & residential);
- Local Authority Air Pollution Control (LAAPC);
- Air Quality Assessment and Monitoring;
- Health and Safety Regulation and the licensing of tattooists, body piercing and acupuncture;
- Infectious Disease Control;
- Animal Welfare Licensing;
- Pest Control and Dog Warden Service.
- Housing standards
- Caravan Sites * Private Water Supplies * Environmental – litter, fly tipping

The total resources currently available within the section for the above is: 7.2 (FTE)

This is made up of:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| - Enforcement Officers | 5.5 (FTE) |
| - Administrative Support | 1 |
| - Environmental Health Services Manager | 0.7 (FTE) |

of the above, the resource to deliver the food safety service is: 1.90 (FTE)

of which:

- | | |
|---|------------|
| - Qualified to inspect Cat. A – B premises: | 1.90 (FTE) |
| - Qualified to inspect Cat C – E: | as above |

For the year 2018/19, the food service should be deliverable within existing resource. It is worth noting that the national average figure for the provision of full time equivalent per 1000 premises is 3.0. The current food safety staffing levels at this Authority is 2.5 per 1000 premises.

The Food Standards Agency 'Approved Premises' Audit undertaken in January 2015 identified that Ribble Valley has a much greater than average number of approved premises for which they are responsible to regulate and because of the important nature of this responsibility, the Council is asked to ensure sufficient competent regulatory resource is allocated and maintained.

As in previous years, there is ongoing work in relation to the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. **In line with national guidance, priority will be given to food premises not achieving a 'broadly compliant' rating of 3 with the aim of achieving a 100% with a rating of 3 and above.**

If during the year it becomes apparent that the service is unable to complete the intended inspection programme, priorities in all areas of work will be reassessed and resources will be allocated to the food service on 'risk based' principles with priority being given to the regulation and inspection of "high risk" (Category A - C) and 'approved' premises. It is unlikely that this years' programme will not be achieved.

Members will be informed of any such re-allocation.

5.0 Analysis of Present Position

5.1 Set out below is the standard SWOT analysis of the Environmental Health Food Safety service:

Strengths

- Well-developed strategies and policies for the service in line with national guidance.
- Service well aligned with corporate strategy/policy.
- Well established performance monitoring procedures.
- Experienced, professional and dedicated staff.
- Low staff turnover.
- Clear commitment to quality service delivery.
- General achievement of Food Safety Act Code of Practice annual inspection programme.
- Introduced National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in 2011
- Relatively high rate of compliance in the Borough.

Weaknesses

- Proactive work at risk in event of public health emergency/reactive work demands i.e serious accidents/ fatalities, outbreaks etc.
- Potential remuneration problem in event of vacancies.
- Increasing complexity of regulation and enforcement - requirement to specialise to achieve & maintain competency.
- Diminishing pool of officers nationally.

Opportunities

- Multi-skilled public health professionals.
- Need to develop proactive public health agenda with other partners – eg healthy eating, smoking cessation, alcohol interventions etc. (although the Healthy Lifestyle section at this Authority do fulfil this role in many respects.)
- Facilitate local food safety training needs.
- Develop new targeted 'intervention' approach to enforcement
- Work with other agencies to develop multi-agency lead inspector approach.

Threats

- Increasing complexity of issues – increasing pressure for greater specialism to meet competence criteria.
- Food safety service audit by Food Standards Agency if fail to meet targets and deliver mandatory duties.
- Increased information gathering and recording – increasing inspection costs.
- Shortage of EHO's entering profession.
- Ever increasing duties and demands in relation to private water supplies, clean environment, industrial air pollution regulation and dog control and capacity to achieve.

6.0 Quality Systems

It is our policy to carry out all areas of food service delivery in accordance with our Food Safety documented procedures and to fulfil any inter-authority audit requirements as required with neighbouring authorities.

7.0 Review

7.1 Periodic review

This Food Hygiene Intervention Plan will be reviewed annually and reported to members. The review will link into the annual budgetary process and the review of associated plans. Performance monitored on monthly basis and quarterly by management review of progress.

7.2 Annual Performance

The figures below were set against the following challenges:

- The inspection figures for 2017-18 below were set against the following challenges:
 - There was a lengthy food safety investigation following a Lancashire wide raw cows drinking milk survey. All four of the raw drinking milk suppliers in the Ribble Valley were found to have failed to produce a product which complied with the current food safety criteria. Two of the premises were linked to illness in the community, and disease causing bacteria were isolated in the milk produced at three of the establishments.
 - For a considerable part of the year a part time member of the food safety team was redeployed to undertake an urgent swimming pool safety campaign following local knowledge which revealed that many of the premises did not comply with the current guidance.

In 2017/18:

- **302 service requests (40% increase on last year) were recorded of which 93% were actioned within the target response time of 2 working days.**
- **77 confirmed cases of infectious diseases were investigated in relation to food-borne organisms**
- **83 food samples were submitted for microbiological examination (three times that of the previous year). This Authority had the highest sampling activity out of the 14 Lancashire Authorities.**
- **99% of the highest risk category of food businesses (A-D) including approved manufacturers were inspected. Out of a programme of 374 interventions, 371 were carried out.**
- **Premises which were found to be 'broadly compliant' increased slightly to 95%.**
- **13% of premises were awarded an improved hygiene rating, and 7 % received a lower hygiene rating. 80% remained at the same hygiene rating.**
- **The percentage of premises inspected, and the high level of compliance make it highly unlikely that this Authority will be selected for audit by the Food Standards Agency.**

- 7.3 Compliance with Local Performance Indicator** In addition to the service performance statistics listed in paragraph 7.3 above:
- **Enforcement of food safety legislation has been implemented in accordance with the Ribble Valley 'Food Safety' Enforcement Policy (Rev. January 2011) and associated standard procedures.**
 - **In the year 2017/18, there have been no complaints received about the Food Safety enforcement activity.**
- 7.4 Identification of significant variance from Service Plan**
- **To be monitored monthly and any significant variation from the plan to be reported promptly to the Health & Housing Committee.**
- 7.5 Service Improvement**
- 7.5 (i) The following areas of service development were identified for 2018/19 :

Corporate Objective	Action	Standard	Method of Measurement	Target	Responsible Officer	Resources	Links	Achieved
To focus EH resources to achieve FSA inspection targets	To undertake 100% of programmed audit/inspection of food premises	Food Standards Agency 'Statutory Food Law Code of Practice' (April 2017).	No of inspections/audits completed	252	Senior EHO (Food/Health and Safety) and EHT's	Employ consultants if necessary	LPI	100% achieved by 31/3/19
To meet mandatory government guidance	To review Food Safety procedures and update to comply with Food Standards Agency 'Food Law' Code of Practice (April 2017)	Food Standards Agency ' Food Law' Code of Practice (April 2017).	Standard Procedures reviewed and standard documents updated	Review by 31.3.19	Senior EHO (Food/Health and Safety)	Within existing	FSA	Ongoing

Legend: FSA – Food Standards Agency LPI – Local Performance indicator

7.5 (ii) Action Plan for the next 12 months:

Corporate Objective	Action	Standard	Method of Measurement	Target	Responsible Officer	Resources	Links	Achieved by
To focus EH resources to achieve FSA inspection targets	To undertake 100% of programmed audit/inspection of food premises	Food Standards Agency 'Statutory Food Law Code of Practice' (April 2017).	No of inspections/audits completed	252+ 82 by alternative inspection	Senior EHO (Food/Health and Safety) and EHT's	Employ consultants if necessary	LPI	31/3/19

Sampling Policy 2018/ 2019

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Ribble Valley Borough Council recognises the important contribution that food sampling makes to the protection of Public Health and the Food Law Enforcement functions of the Authority.
- 1.2 Food Safety Officers from the Environmental Health Section will be responsible for undertaking the food sampling functions of the Council.
- 1.3 Consideration will be given to food sampling in the following specific situations:
 - National, Regional and Locally co-ordinated surveys/programmes;
 - complaints;
 - process monitoring;
 - inspections;
 - Home Authority Principal activities;
 - special investigations;
 - imported foods.

2. Food Sampling Surveys/Programmes

- 2.1 Ribble Valley Borough Council will make provision to co-operate and, where possible, participate in all food sampling surveys. However, some surveys may involve foods or food premises which are either in short supply or not available in the Ribble Valley, in which case a reduced number of samples or no samples will be submitted to the laboratory.
- 2.2 **National Surveys**
 - 2.2.1 National surveys may be organised through the Food Standards Agency as part of the EC co-ordinated sampling programme.
 - 2.2.2 The Food Water and Environmental Microbiology Services (FWEMS), also arrange National Surveys each year.
- 2.3 **Regional Sampling Programme**
 - 2.3.1 A Survey Sub-Committee comprising of officers from the FWEMS, the Lancashire Food Officer Group and the Greater Manchester Food Liaison Group are responsible for drawing up and distributing a sampling programme every four months. This programme determines the number of samples required and the sampling frequency.
- 2.4 **Local Sampling Programmes**
 - 2.4.1 Food sampling will be carried out at Approved premises at the officer's discretion. A local survey may be generated following a food poisoning incident, as a follow-up survey following a local sampling initiative, or where Enforcement Officers Determine a need for sampling as a 'verification' check.

3. Food Complaints

- 3.1 Samples of food received as a food complaint may require microbiological examination or chemical analysis. The FWEMS Laboratory York will undertake all microbiological examinations and the County Analyst at the County Laboratory in Preston, is used for any samples which require chemical analysis.
- 3.2 All food complaints are taken seriously and the results of an examination or analysis may generate the need for more controlled sampling of the food product or from the food premises.
- 3.3 Consideration will be given to the sampling of locally produced products, in particular dairy, and meat products manufactured in approved premises.

4. Inspections

- 5.1 Food sampling will not normally be undertaken as a constituent part of food safety inspections. However, it will be left to the inspecting officer's discretion whether samples are taken for monitoring purposes following any inspection.

6. Primary Authority Responsibilities

- 6.1 There have been no requests from any food businesses within the borough for 'Primary Authority' agreements. The Authority does, however, act as Originating Authority for some food businesses.
- 6.2 There is no intention to take routine food samples from any food businesses for which this Authority acts as Originating Authority.

7. Special Investigations

- 7.1 Special circumstances may arise during a year, which will require samples to be taken. These samples will most likely be generated during the investigation of food poisoning incidents. Samples may include environmental samples in addition to food samples.

8. Imported Foods

- 8.1 At present there are no companies or businesses in the Ribble Valley Borough area, which regularly receive imported foods directly upon importation into the UK. Therefore, no routine sampling of imported foods at wholesalers will be undertaken. However, consideration will be given to the directed sampling of imported foods wherever possible, with the targeting of 'high risk' animal and non-animal origin imported foods noted during routine inspections or found on display by major retailers.

If, however, circumstances change this Policy will be reviewed in the light of future developments.

Sampling Programme 2017/ 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Ribble Valley Borough Council recognises the important contribution that food sampling makes to the protection of Public Health and the Food Law Enforcement functions of the Authority.
- 1.2 In developing a sampling programme consideration is given to:
- protecting the consumer through the enforcement of food legislation;
 - identifying foods that pose a hazard to the consumer because they contain significant levels of pathogenic bacteria;
 - surveillance and sampling of imported foods of animal and non-animal origin, particular attention will be given to products of non-animal origin due to lower sampling levels at point of import;
 - assessing the microbiological quality of food manufactured, distributed or retailed in the area against the standards detailed in Regulation (EC) 2073/2005
 - identifying any contraventions the food safety and fitness standards made law in Article 14 of Regulation (EC)178/2002, and Regulation 4 of the General Food Regulation 2004.
 - helping determine whether advice or enforcement action would be appropriate where it is suspected that poor practices and procedures exist;
 - offering advice and guidance, if appropriate, on food hygiene matters.

2. Scope of Sampling

- 2.1 Ribble Valley Borough Council is a Shire District Council and, therefore, does not have any responsibility for Food Standards issues such as food composition or labelling, (which usually require analysis of the samples). These matters are the responsibility of the County Council through the Trading Standards Department. Therefore, this Sampling Programme will relate solely to food sampling for microbiological examination.
- 2.2 Previously, in accordance with the revised Food Standards Agency 'Food Law' Code of Practice (revised March 2017), the Sampling Programme has been prepared in consultation with colleagues from the Lancashire Food Officer Group and the Greater Manchester Food Liaison Group along with the Food Examiner from the Food, Water, and Environmental Services (FWEMS) Laboratory York.

In the past few years however whilst resources have been deployed to other Environmental Health priorities, a decision was made to only take samples as determined necessary during inspections especially of 'high risk' food manufacturers, or as verification checks on new manufacturers.

- 2.3 The Council engages the services of the FWEMS Laboratory to undertake all microbiological examinations.
- 2.4 The County Analyst, based at the County Laboratory in Preston, is used for any foods or water which require analysis. These samples are usually related to the investigation of food complaints and, therefore, they will not form part of the annual sampling programme.
- 2.5 Advice will be sought from the FWEMS Laboratory regarding the size/quantity of the food sample required for examination.

3. Funding

- 3.1 At present, funding for the examination of routine food samples is borne by the FWEMS Laboratory based on a 'credit allocation system' which is calculated on the size of each Authority. However, as the Sampling Programme is agreed jointly by two Food Officer Groups, there is the flexibility to share out unused/surplus credits, by agreement, between Authorities if insufficient credits are available for a particular survey.
- 3.2 Sampling credits are levied for each type of food or examination undertaken. The FWEMS Laboratory maintains the register of credits and a report is issued to each Authority on a quarterly basis.
- 3.3 Some examinations are classed by the FWEMS Laboratory as 'new work' and do not have a credit value allocated to them. Payment for the examination of these samples, along with any fees for analysis of complaint samples, will be made by Ribble Valley Borough Council from the environmental health service sampling budget.

4. Sampling Programme

- 4.1 Food sampling will be carried out as and when deemed necessary by the Enforcement Officers and particular attention will be made to sampling from approved premises and premises producing high risk foods, as part of official control visits.
- 4.2 The Sampling Programme shall consist of the food sample surveys recommended by the Survey Sub-Committee and agreed by the Lancashire Food Office Group where possible.
- 4.3 At the end of each sample survey the FWEMS Laboratory shall collate the results and produce a summary of the survey. This summary shall be presented to the next meeting of the Food Liaison Group.