



Food Law Enforcement Plan 2012/2013

**Produced in accordance with the
Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement**

Foreword

Breckland Council is committed to ensuring that food produced, sold or consumed in the district is safe to eat and does not pose a risk to public health.

This Food Law Enforcement Plan is dedicated to the food safety enforcement function and covers all the elements of food safety and hygiene for which the Council has enforcement responsibility.

The requirement to have a Food Law Enforcement Plan is laid down by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in its *Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement*. The FSA was established in April 2000 as an independent monitoring and advisory body. One of the aims of the FSA is to make food law enforcement more effective, efficient and accountable.

This Food Law Enforcement Plan sets out how Breckland Council will deliver the food safety enforcement function in accordance with current guidelines in the financial year 2012/13.

1. Service Aims and Objectives

1.1 Aim

- To maintain and where possible improve the health and wellbeing of residents, workers and visitors to Breckland by ensuring the safe production, processing, handling, storage, distribution and sale of food in the district.

Objectives

- To meet the 'standard' set out in the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement issued by the Food Standards Agency
- To ensure that food is fit to eat and free from extraneous matter
- To maintain an accurate register of food businesses in the district
- To carry out food hygiene inspections in accordance with the minimum inspection frequencies and to standards determined by the Food Standards Agency
- To encourage standards of hygiene higher than the minimum acceptable in law by aspiring to have all food premises reach 4 or 5 rating
- To increase the knowledge of food handlers and the general public about the principles and practice of food hygiene and healthy eating
- To deal with food hazards in accordance with Food Standards Agency guidance
- To investigate all notified cases of food-borne disease and take effective action to control the spread of infection
- To contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan by assisting the Council to achieve its priorities, through the principles of performance, partnership and participation

1.2 Council Objectives and Plans

The Council's Priorities are detailed in the Corporate Plan 2011-15. The delivery of this Food Law Enforcement Plan contributes to the following objectives of the Corporate Plan:

BD 02.02: Improve health, wellbeing and standards of living

We do this by:

- Inspecting food premises in accordance with Food Law Code of Practice guidance
- Promoting the use of Safer Food Better Business in all food premises
- Inspecting and sampling food to ensure its quality and safety
- Investigating complaints about food and food premises
- Investigating all reported cases of food poisoning and taking action to prevent the spread of infection
- Taking appropriate action in response to food alerts
- Promoting the HONOR award scheme to encouraging healthy food choices, sourcing food locally and the provision of breast feeding facilities
- Promoting key food safety messages as part of National Food Safety Week

BD 03.01: Support business development and skills training

We do this by:

- Working with new businesses and event organisers to ensure that they understand and meet their statutory responsibilities before they start operating
- Providing training courses that enable food handlers to obtain a recognised certificate in Food Hygiene in order to meet requirements of Food Safety legislation
- Producing an occasional Food Safety Newsletter for all food business operators
- Providing food hygiene guidance in languages other than English
- Establishing Primary Authority agreements with business to help reduce the regulatory burden

BD 03.02: Encourage the creation of quality jobs

We do this by:

- Working with new business operators to help them understand and meet legal standards relating to food businesses
- Offering advice and guidance as part of routine inspections

BD 04.01: Maximise trading opportunities

We do this by:

- Providing a range of training courses for Food Business Operators and their staff as an income stream for the Council
- Promoting businesses achievement (HONOR and Food Hygiene Rating Scheme) through the Council's website
- Establishing Primary Authority agreements with business to help reduce the regulatory burden

BD 04.03: Improve productivity and deliver Value for Money

We do this by:

- Periodically reviewing the way in which the service is offered and implementing identified improvements that maximise the use of available resources or improve the level of service received by residents, visitors and food business operators in the district

This document also supports the Environmental Health Business Plan 2012-2013.

2. Background

2.1 Profile of Breckland

Breckland is one of the largest rural districts in England, at 1,305 square kilometres. Much of the area is given over to agriculture, with large open spaces of heathland known as the "Brecks" from which the district gets its name. The rural nature of the area brings challenges in terms of transport and access.

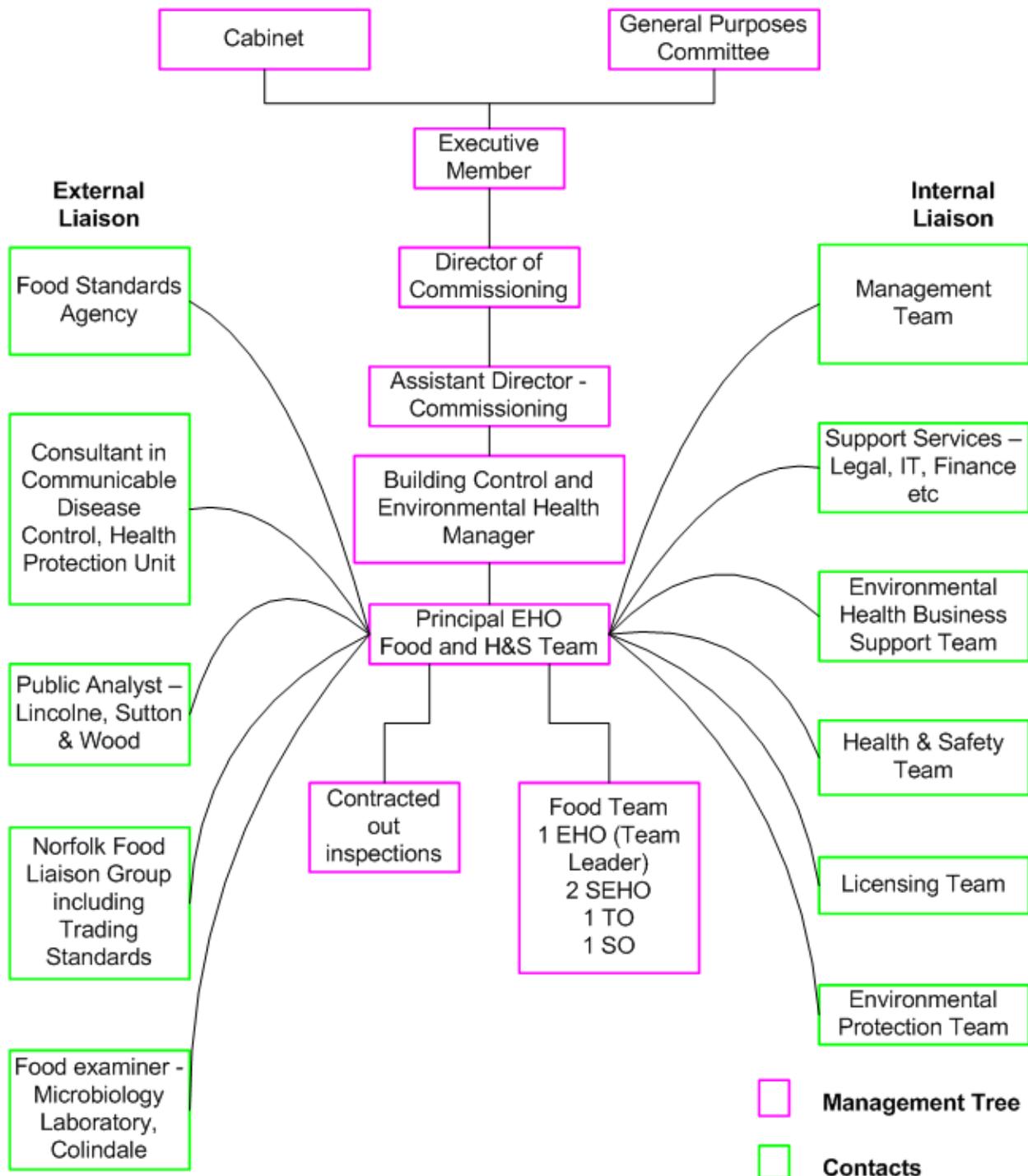
Breckland is centred around the five market towns of Attleborough, Dereham, Thetford, Swaffham and Watton, but there are also 107 rural parishes. The mid year population in 2005 was 127,100. Breckland also attracts an estimated 1.5 million visitors each year.

We have a growing population of migrant workers and families moving to Breckland from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania. We also have an established Portuguese community that has built up over many years. Food businesses run by those not having English as a first language include those speaking Chinese, Turkish, Bengali, Thai, Portuguese and Latvian.

In common with the rest of Norfolk, most people in Breckland work in the retail, distribution and catering sectors. However, there are huge differences between the towns, with manufacturing accounting for nearly 50% of employment in Thetford.

2.2 Organisational Structure – Breckland Food Team

Detailing only those parts of Breckland's organisation directly relevant to management of the Food Team



2.3 Scope of the Food Service

The Food Team is responsible for all aspects of food hygiene and safety, infectious disease control and food safety related health promotion. Responsibilities include:

- Inspection of food premises in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice
- Registration of food businesses
- Investigation of complaints about food and hygiene at food premises

- Sampling of foodstuffs for the purposes of microbiological examination
- Investigation of food borne infection
- Investigation of food poisoning outbreaks
- Imported food control; sampling and enforcement
- Food alerts (food hazard warnings)
- Promotion of Safer Food Better Business
- Promotion of the National Food Hygiene Rating scheme
- Provision of advice and guidance; including participation in events that promote food safety
- Food hygiene training courses
- Promotion of healthy eating options (HONOR Award)
- Giving food hygiene talks to groups and organisations

The team also carry out health & safety inspections in food premises.

As part of the provision of a complete service the team works in conjunction with the following partner organisations:

- Food examination and microbiology – Health Protection Agency
- Food contamination – the Public Analyst (Lincolne Sutton and Wood)
- Zoonosis – the Veterinary Investigation Agency
- Food poisoning notifications – Norfolk Health Protection Unit

A contractor is used for some food hygiene inspection work.

2.4 Demands on the Food Service

2.4.1 Brief outline

On 1 April 2011 there were 1367 food premises in Breckland. The number of each type of food business is as follows:

Type of Food Business	No. of Premises
Producers	17
Manufacturers & Packers	53
Importers/Exporters	2
Distributors/Transporters	31
Retailers	281
Restaurants/Caterers	983
Total:	1367

Of these 1302 premises are registered in accordance with Regulation (EC) 852/2004, eight are approved in accordance with Regulation (EC) 853/2004, 18 are unrated awaiting inspection, with a further 7 outside the enforcement responsibility of the Council.

There are several major food processors, including meat products and preparations and vegetable processors. There are many agricultural producers including egg producers, small poultry slaughterhouses and farmers selling meat directly to the public. With more farmers diversifying into food businesses much support is needed. The majority of food businesses are involved in catering but there are a number whose needs are different such as food businesses where staff speak languages other than English.

2.4.2 Service Delivery

The Food Team is based at the Council's Dereham Office, which is open from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Thursday and 9.00 am to 4.30 pm on Friday. Some visits are made outside these times, including weekends, as determined by the needs of the service and the trading hours of the particular food business.

Food complaints and requests can be received at the Council's Thetford Office. Requests and information can also be received at part-time Presence Offices at Attleborough, Swaffham and Watton. In view of the rural nature and large size of the district officers also carry out site visits to receive complaints and to fulfil service requests where necessary.

Out of hours contact is through a 24-hour call centre provided by the Flagship Housing Association. Issues requiring urgent attention are passed to designated officers for assessment and action where appropriate.

The rural nature and large size of the district necessitates much time and expense in travelling.

2.4.2 External Factors

Of all the food premises just below 5% of business owners do not have English as their first language, including Chinese, Turkish, Bengali, Thai, Portuguese and Latvian. We work with all business owners to help them comply with food hygiene law which include providing guidance which is interpreted into a number of languages, the provision of INTRAN and interpreters and facilitating local courses which are completed in a number of different languages.

Imported food checks are made as part of routine inspections. Officers are kept up to date on new legislation (eg: The Trade in Animal and Related Products Regulations 2011) and current issues with imported food. A work instruction on Imported Food matters is maintained by the team.

Seasonal or occasional food premises inspections include:

- Premises associated with tourism, such as caravan sites, ice cream sales and Bed & Breakfast establishments
- Christmas poultry producers
- Farmers markets

2.5 Regulation Policy

Breckland Council fully supports the approach to good enforcement practice that is outlined in the Regulators Compliance Code, which came into force in April 2008. The Council has a corporate Enforcement Policy that aims to deliver improved regulatory outcomes, particularly those related to health, safety, crime reduction, antisocial behaviour, environmental protection and economic vitality, whilst reducing unnecessary burdens on compliant businesses.

The Enforcement Policy was reviewed in 2010.

3. Service Delivery

3.1.1 Food Premises Interventions

The Council uses the Food Hygiene Intervention Rating Scheme as detailed in the Food Law Code of Practice (England) to determine the frequency that food premises should be inspected. This ensures that all premises are inspected at an appropriate minimum interval determined by their individual risk rating. This is based on the nature of food handling undertaken, the level of compliance with legal requirements and confidence in food safety management systems. This frequency varies from 6 monthly to three years depending on the assessed risk category:

Risk Category	Frequency of inspection
A	6 months
B	12 months
C	18 months
D	2 years
E	Alternative inspection strategy every 3 years

Interventions are carried out in accordance with the team's Food Safety Interventions Work Instructions, which incorporate the provision for an alternative intervention strategy for lower risk premises. This includes the use of a self assessment questionnaire for Category E premises, enabling resources to be diverted to those higher risk premises not achieving good standards. Low risk premises not returning a completed questionnaire or where changes or particular concerns are noted will receive a visit.

The Civica APP/FLARE database is maintained to manage all food premises records and all inspections and other related activities. The Food Safety team is connected to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health's (CIEH) intranet service (EHCnet) and is accessible by e-mail and website. The team is fully committed to the development of the Breckland website for communication with food businesses and the public

The team aims to undertake interventions within 28 days of the due date for Category A-C and 56 days for Category D premises. However, in the event of circumstances occurring that would prevent this, priority is given to higher risk (Band A, B and C) non-broadly compliant premises.

Food businesses that fail to comply with significant statutory requirements are subject to appropriate enforcement action and secondary inspections. This can include the service of Hygiene Improvement Notices where, for example, work detailed on a previous report has not been completed, or if serious concerns about food safety are identified during an inspection. Where conditions or practices pose an imminent risk to health, on the spot action may be taken, including immediate closure of the premises by the service of a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice.

Details of resource requirements are set out in section 4.2 below.

3.1.2 Premises Profile

During 2012/13 the following programmed interventions are anticipated:

Risk Category	Number of Anticipated Interventions
A	4
B	72
C	296
D	93
E	202
Total Due:	667

In addition it is expected that approximately 230 new food registration applications will be received, as a result of changes of ownership and new businesses opening. The team aim to inspect these within 28 days of receiving the application, or 56 days in the case of low risk activities.

It is estimated that at least 224 revisits will be required during 2011/2012, with a similar number in 2012/13.

Visits will also be carried out following receipt of complaints from the public. In 2010/11 116 complaints were received relating to hygiene and food handling matters, with an estimated 88 in 2011/12. A similar number is anticipated for 2012/13.

3.1.3 Priorities for 2012/13

These include:

- Implementing revised working arrangements resulting from a review of the Environmental Health Service
- Applying alternative intervention strategy options to a wider range of food businesses
- Ensuring the implementation of new *E. coli* guidance in butchers shops and catering premises
- Checking imported food as part of routine inspections of retail outlets
- Reviewing the effectiveness of implementing the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in the district
- Updating food related work instructions
- Sampling food in accordance with the agreed Norfolk Food Liaison Group programme
- Expanding the number and range of food hygiene courses offered to food businesses.
- Exploring the potential for establishing Primary Authority agreements

These are aimed at delivering the following strategic food safety imperatives of the Food Standards Agency:

- Reduced food borne diseases, tackling *Campylobacter* and *Listeria* contamination as priorities
- Deliver more risk-based, proportionate, targeted and cost effective Official Controls
- Greater targeting of enforcement at higher risk business and persistent non-compliers
- Providing more information to consumers on food safety standards and food premises (eg: Food Hygiene Rating Scheme)
- More emphasis on imported food – ensuring risk-based targeted checks

Additional resources have been provided on a self financing basis to enable the in-house provision of food hygiene training courses. This has been achieved by increasing the number of hours worked by a part time member of staff. All other priorities will be met from within existing resources.

3.1.4 Inspection of Specialised Premises

A review of staffing resources and working arrangements undertaken at the end of 2011/12, is likely to result in revised resource allocations in 2012/13. This concludes that there is generally adequate staff competency within the team for the inspection of all types of food premises in Breckland. Additional expertise can be drawn upon from colleagues in South Holland Council, with whom there is a shared service agreement. Advantage will be also be taken of courses provided by the Food Standards Agency to develop further knowledge as necessary. A move to greater use of auditing skills, for example, is likely to require officers to require some additional training.

3.2 Food Complaints

Officers investigate all complaints relating to food produced, stored, distributed or sold in the Breckland area, including contamination, unfitness and being out of date, as well as food hygiene complaints and reported cases of food poisoning. These are investigated in accordance with the team's work instructions and, where appropriate, the Council's Enforcement Policy.

The number of food complaints received:

	2010/11	Estimated 2011/12	Estimated 2012/13
Total food complaints	37	30	30

Investigations are usually made in consultation with the local authority with responsibility for the company concerned or the manufacturing premises where the problem may have originated. This approach is intended to ensure that all parties are kept informed, any 'due diligence' defence identified and any further action taken based on investigation findings and information received.

Demand on the service is expected to remain at a similar level to previous years and will be met from within existing resources.

3.3 Home and Primary Authority Schemes

The Council is committed to developing good relationships with food businesses in the district and where appropriate establishing Home or Primary Authority Partnership agreements. Although it currently has no such agreements with food businesses, it recognises the importance and benefits to all parties and will actively seek opportunities to develop effective partnership agreements. It also recognises the potential impact on resources from this work and will endeavour to recover any additional costs through the permitted charging regime.

Officers regularly check the LBRO database of existing Primary Authority Partnerships and have regard to any inspection or sampling plans for premises operating in the district. They consult the appropriate Council when considering enforcement action.

The Food team will also endeavour to meet requests from other local authorities for information or investigations in relation to food complaints arising from food produced in Breckland. These will be fully investigated in partnership with the business concerned with a view to ascertaining the cause of the complaint and preventing a recurrence. Full reports are provided to the local authorities concerned.

3.4 Food Safety Advice and Training

The team provide advice and support to all food businesses, voluntary groups, charities and members of the public. It also offers a programme of formal food hygiene training courses to help food business operators and their staff to gain sufficient knowledge to achieve high standards of food hygiene at work, in the community or at home.

These services are provided by:

Advice and Support

- Through Breckland Council's website
- Verbal advice on request
- Leaflets and written advice on request
- Sending information to new businesses identified on planning and licence lists
- Advice during food hygiene inspections
- Written and verbal advice and literature to new businesses
- Consultation visits to food businesses on request
- Provision of Breckland's hazard pack or SFBB and refill packs by request
- On site promotional visits where advice to operators or staff is needed regarding specific problems, e.g. handwashing or cleaning
- Offering the HONOR healthy eating award
- Issuing occasional newsletters to food businesses

Training

The following will be provided subject to adequate demand:

- A programme of Level 2 Food Hygiene Courses
- In-house Level 2 Food Hygiene Courses on request

The provision of own language Food Hygiene Courses for ethnic businesses can only be provided in partnership with other training organisations.

Advice and training	2010/11	Estimated 2011/12	Estimated 2012/13
Number of requests for advice	458	498	480
Number of food hygiene courses	20	15	20+

The team also work in partnership with the Council's Community Development and Economic Development teams to provide training courses and general advice as appropriate. It also occasionally contributes to Business Breakfast meetings or similar.

This activity is provided within existing resources, following the bringing in-house of food hygiene training courses from April 2011 and their operation on a self financing basis.

Demand for requests for advice is likely to remain stable in the current year, but it is planned to increase the range and number of training courses provided in 2012/13 and onwards.

3.5 Food Sampling

3.5.1 Informal Microbiological Sampling

The Food Team carries out programmed sampling to determine the microbiological safety of food produced and sold in Breckland, trends in microbiological quality, to ascertain whether handling, processing and storage techniques are satisfactory and to determine the effectiveness of cleaning and disinfection. Samples are taken in accordance with the team's work instructions.

The sampling programme comprises two parts:

- The Breckland sampling programme which consists of samples of high risk food from producers or caterers in the district.
- The Eastern Region Food Liaison Group food sampling programme which is carried out in conjunction with other local authorities in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex. This includes samples programmes carried out for LACORS/LGR, EU and the Food Standards Agency in conjunction with the Health Protection Agency's laboratory at Colindale.

All Microbiological food samples are collected and transported to Colindale by an HPA appointed courier for analysis.

	2010/11	Estimated 2011/12	Estimated 2012/13
Number of Informal Samples	156	71	120

3.5.2 Formal Examination and Analysis

Food samples are submitted for formal examination by a Food Examiner provided by the Health Protection Agency laboratory at Collindale as necessary. Should the need arise, further detailed examination may be requested by the public analyst, Lincoln Sutton and Wood Ltd in Norwich.

Samples are taken and handled in accordance with the team's work instructions.

3.5.3 Water Samples

Water samples are collected in conjunction with Breckland Council's Environmental Protection team, with whom full liaison takes place in relation to food premises and infectious disease investigations.

All of the above sampling activities are met from within existing resources (two days per month) with the cost of informal food sample analysis funded by a credit system operated by the Health Protection Agency.

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Cases of Food Related Infectious Disease

The Food Team works closely with the local Health Protection Unit to investigate sporadic and linked cases of gastrointestinal illness and outbreaks. In the case of sporadic cases this is usually achieved by postal questionnaires or telephone surveys. This screening is aimed at identifying potential outbreaks and common sources of infection, preventing the spread of infection, promoting good hygiene practices and to analyse information gained from the investigation. Outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness are investigated in order to identify the cause, prevent recurrence of any problems and to limit further spread.

Investigations are carried out in accordance with the team's work instructions and where appropriate the Norfolk Outbreak Control Plan. Investigations of outbreaks can be extremely time consuming and take priority over other work.

Historical data indicates that approximately 200 (212 cases estimated for 2011/12) cases of gastrointestinal illness are reported each year and will continue to be met from within existing resources.

During 2011/12, the Health Protection Unit took a more proactive role and dealt with most reported cases of Norovirus in residential homes, slightly reducing the workload of the Food Team.

3.7 Food Safety Incidents

All food safety incidents and Food Alerts notified by the Food Standards Agency are handled in accordance with the team's work instructions and requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice (England).

The team maintain a dedicated mail box to receive all such notifications; this is regularly monitored during the day. Food Alerts are treated as high priority and are responded to within 24 hours, with any required action given priority. Where action is required, this is usually carried out in liaison with members of the Norfolk Food Liaison Group to ensure consistency.

Food Alerts Received	2010/11	Estimated 2011/12	Estimated 2012/13
Food Alerts requiring no action	68	85	80
Food Alerts requiring phone calls, letters or press release	3	1	1
Food Alerts requiring calls to premises	1	0	1

This work continues to be met from within existing resources.

3.8 Liaison with Other Organisations

Breckland Council is a member of the Norfolk Food Liaison Group, which meets approximately 6 times a year. The group provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and new initiatives and to develop a consistent approach to all aspects of food law enforcement and service delivery, as well as the development of guidance and best practice. It also provides a vehicle for liaison with other agencies (such as Trading Standards, Food Standards Agency, Health Protection Agency) and agreeing food sampling programmes. This group also maintains strong links to other county groups in the East of England.

The Council is also represented on the Norfolk Chief Environmental Health Officers Group, which maintains a more strategic overview in the county.

3.9 Food Safety Promotion and Non-Official Controls

Breckland Council was an 'early adopter' of the National Food Hygiene Rating scheme in 2010/11, adopting a 'big bang' approach to its implementation. It continues to promote the benefits of a rating of 3-5 to food business operators and the public, during programmed visits, through promotional activities and in the Council's publication 'Breckland Voice'. The effectiveness of the scheme is evaluated by periodically monitoring the proportion of premises in the higher rating bands.

The Food Team continues to offer a programme of regular level 2 food safety courses held in Thetford and Dereham, as well as occasional 'on site' courses for local businesses and the Council's Community Development team. The delivery of these courses has been brought 'in-house' during 2011/12 using operational staff to maximise the benefits to candidates. Effectiveness is monitored using course evaluation questionnaires. During 2012/13 the course programme has been enlarged to include half day refresher and whole day HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) training. Course evaluation forms are used to monitor effectiveness, with high levels of satisfaction being consistently recorded.

Officers also work with local schools to promote similar training for students, with a review of arrangements and further promotional activities carried out in 2011/12, taking effect in 2012/13. Effective hand washing is actively promoted using its 'Glow Box' during food safety courses, at promotional events and by lending it to community groups.

Routine food safety interventions are used as an opportunity to raise awareness of health issues in relation to food, with the HONOR (Healthy Options Norfolk) award scheme used to promote:

- Healthier food choices
- Locally sourced food
- Breast feeding friendly environment

Award winners receive a certificate and window sticker and are promoted by the Council's website. It is planned to promote this further in 2012/13 to increase the number of award holders.

Food safety health promotion work is carried out by Food Team Officers (approximately three days per month) in partnership with others where possible.

4. Resources

4.1 Financial Allocation

The total expenditure on the food service is relatively stable, with the effects of a restructuring and reorganisation exercise expected to take effect in 2012/13.

Expenditure Trend

Description	2010/2011 £	Estimate 2011/12 £	Provisional 2012/13 £ **
Employee related expenses	197,840	195,040	193,560
Transport related expenses	13,830	16,060	16,360
Supplies and services	22,050	21,930	21,930
Support services	56,200	55,680	56,160
Income (courses etc)	(6,300)	(6,300)	(6,300)
Total expenditure	283,620	282,410	281,710

NB:** 2012/13 figures subject to change following review of Environmental Health

4.2 Staffing Allocation

In 2011/12 the Food Team comprised:

- 0.5 FTE Principal Environmental Health Officer
- 1.0 FTE Team Leader (Food)
- 2.0 FTE x Senior Environmental Health Officer (1x F/T and 2 x P/T posts)
- 1.0 FTE x part time Technical Officer (2x P/T posts) and
- 1.0 FTE x Technical Administration Officers (2 x P/T posts)

This is likely to change as a result of the review of Environmental Health. Any reduction in staff numbers is expected to be offset by a greater use of new technology.

A contracted inspections budget exists to allow employment of contractors to carry out some inspections. A detailed specification exists for this work and requires any contracted inspectors to be qualified to a minimum standard of the Higher Certificate of the Environmental Health Officers Registration Board.

The competency and quality of work of all inspection staff is regularly monitored in accordance with the team's work instructions, with staff only allocated to the work for which they are deemed competent. New staff are subject to supervision until deemed competent.

Support for website, typing, infectious disease administration, purchasing, etc. is provided by the Business Support Team.

Resource Challenges during 2012/2013 include:

- Business transformation of the Food Safety team
- Reducing the number of premises that are not "broadly compliant"
- Maintaining the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme
- Promoting wider uptake of the HONOR award scheme
- Developing a wider range of food hygiene courses
- Implementing E. coli guidance for butchers shops and caterers
- Maintaining good standards of response to customers

The work plan for the year is designed to make the most of the resources available to the team within the budget approved. It is therefore anticipated that there will be sufficient staff and budget available to carry out the plan in full. Estimates of the resource needs are based on comparisons with previous year's workload.

Improvements to the service detailed in this Plan will be carried out by team members.

4.3 Staff Development Plan

Breckland Council operates a staff appraisal scheme for all staff. This is based on six monthly reviews and a Personal Development Plan, which includes skill and competence training as well as personal development training. This is supplemented by regular 1:1 meetings to review progress against targets, identify additional training needs and consider problems and new initiatives.

Competence training with regard to the Food Law Code of Practice will be provided for the team in-house by occasional training sessions. Additional training is carried out in conjunction with Norfolk Food Liaison Group and the Eastern Region Centre of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, linking with training provided by the Food Standards Agency. In-house training is also provided in relation to information technology training and the FLARE database as necessary and as systems develop. Training in management skills is also provided as necessary.

5. Quality Assessment

5.1 The Food Team is fully committed to the principle of continuous improvement and will strive to maintain high standards of performance and maintain good relations with food businesses and colleagues in other councils and food related organisations.

During 2011/12 work instructions covering all aspects of the work of the team were reviewed and updated as necessary. This work will continue in 2012/13. A comprehensive monitoring programme is undertaken, involving accompanied inspections and reviewing of inspection records and ratings. Records are maintained of findings and discussed individually with the officers concerned and at regular team meetings when issues of a more generic nature are identified.

Food hygiene courses are monitored using end of course evaluation questionnaires.

6. Review

6.1 Review against the Service Plan

A review of individual officer's performance is undertaken at regular 1:1 meetings, with further reviews undertaken each quarter when additional inspections for the next period are allocated. This provides an opportunity to understand the reason for any variance from the plan and to take timely corrective action.

Performance targets are defined in annual appraisal targets and regularly monitored, both as part of this process and as part of regular management monitoring activity. Data is maintained and monitored using the department's FLARE database, which is used to hold data on the work of the team.

The Food Law Enforcement Plan will be reviewed in March 2013 and revised as necessary for 2013/14.

6.2 Identification of any Variance from the Service Plan

Regular monitoring of service activity has ensured that the planned actions for 2011/12 were achieved.

6.3 Areas of Improvement

During 2011/12 a review was undertaken of working procedures to promoting smarter, more effective and efficient ways of working and reducing duplication. This was based on:

- Increased resilience through a two authority delivery model
- Shared partnership working
- A scalable model that can expand to 'trade' or add in further local authorities

This is expected to focus on the use of IT to promote greater mobile working and the internet to give greater public access to the services offered. The outcome from this review will be implemented during 2012/13.