

Environmental and Health Services
Annual Food Safety Report
2015/16



Environmental and Health



Date: June 2016
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ENFORCEMENT

- **29** Hygiene Improvement Notices served on **21** different businesses (all catering). All Notices complied with and checked/audited prior and post- service ensuring internal consistency and fairness to businesses.
- New Environmental & Health Services **Enforcement Policy** – adopted by the Council in February 2016. Published on the Council's website.
- New authorisations have been drafted for enforcement officers with up to date legislation and these will be issued and in use in 2016/17

Actions taken

- **1 voluntary closure:** due to very poor cleanliness and out of date and unfit food at a café in Stafford town centre.



Strawberries found in refrigerator



Kitchen floor

The premises was permitted to re-open the following day (Saturday) as significant improvements had been made and re-visits have confirmed continuing progress and compliance.

- **2** takeaway businesses closed using **hygiene emergency prohibition procedures**, with prohibition orders obtained from Cannock magistrates' court. There were significant mice infestations at the two adjoining takeaway business in Stafford. Prosecution cases are now being considered.



- Stafford Borough Council's **Food Safety Service plan 2015-18** was presented at, and agreed by, Scrutiny Committee in October 2015.

The four-year plan gives clear details of the services to be provided and how they will be carried out in the coming years.

The plan also demonstrates how the Food and Safety Team contributes to, and supports, others in delivering Corporate Objectives to the Community as a whole.

INTER-AUTHORITY AUDITING

A programme of inter-authority auditing has been developed and is part of the Central England Food Liaison Group North work programme.

The programme aims to ensure a consistent approach to food enforcement between local authorities and to provide an opportunity for peer review and shared learning.

Stafford Borough Council's formal enforcement actions for food safety were audited by officers from Tamworth Borough Council in March 2016. We have received positive verbal feedback and when the full audit report is received we will draw up an action plan for all the recommendations made.

ISO 9001 QUALITY PROCEDURES

In preparation for the Service's formal ISO 9001 submission in 2016 for food safety, noise and bereavement services, existing food safety procedures have been updated and new ones compiled to ensure delivery of a quality service, consistency and fairness to businesses.

Internal training has been delivered and will continue to ensure the team are aware of, and are using, these procedures. Internal quality monitoring by managers will further ensure this.

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

In accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (England) 2015 and the Food Law Practice Guidance (October 2015), Competent Authorities now need to satisfy themselves that officers can provide demonstrable evidence that they meet the competency requirements set out in these documents.

Officers have been working through the Authorised Officer and Lead Officer framework and these will be fully completed in 2016.

SAMPLING

We took 109 food and environmental samples in 2015/16. Of these, 29 were borderline (at the limit of microbiological quality) or unsatisfactory (but unlikely to cause food poisoning) where follow-up action is always taken. Unsatisfactory food and swabbing results from a butchers shop resulted in the service of Hygiene Improvement Notices.

All officers are now fully using UKFSS (UK Food Surveillance (System) and entering their own samples onto the system after attending a free Food Standards Agency training course. This has enabled more flexibility.

The regional and national studies we have taken part in included long life sandwiches, sandwich and jacket potato fillings and ready to eat salads. We have continued to use sampling as an alternative food hygiene intervention at compliant businesses.

For more than 12 months we have asked businesses what they think we should sample but we haven't had any responses or comments.

Following reconfiguration of PHE (Public Health England), it was announced in April 2016 that the PHE food, water and environmental laboratory we use in Birmingham is closing at the end of the year. Our samples will be tested at one of the three remaining PHE labs in York, London or Porton.

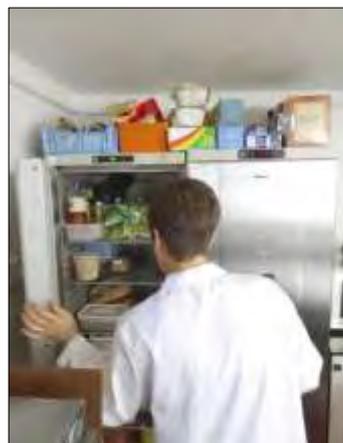
INSPECTIONS

- We carried out 704 food interventions against premises due for inspection in 2015/16:
 - Programmed inspections and audits 616, advisory visits 49
 - Other food visits covering: planning, sampling, licensing, risk assessment
 - We have started to e-mail inspection letters and reports where possible to reduce cost and where appropriate we are completing IROV's (instant reports of visit) at some businesses to reduce administration time.
- Regulatory Services undertook a series of 3 food -led projects with a whole team approach to inspecting premises. Each project concentrated on a specific geographical area in the Borough on one or two days and nights.

The focus of this activity was food businesses with poor ratings (0-2) and those due for inspection. The projects were collaborations between several regulatory areas including waste, smoking, pest control, housing issues above commercial premises. This work also provided an opportunity to update our premises database:

'Operation Market' (Eccleshall) July 2015

- 29 Food Inspections completed
- 6 Updated Food Business Registrations
- 10 New Premises Identified
- 5 Hygiene Improvement Notices
- 5 Food Hygiene Rating Scores went down
- 4 Food Hygiene Rating Scores went up
- 10 Health and Safety Interventions
- 32 Smoke free premises checks



'Operation Alley' (Stone) October 2015

- 16 Food hygiene inspections
- 1 Hygiene Improvement Notice served
- 3 New food business registrations

Other issues checked:

- Any buildings with pigeon roosting issues
- Food premises with living accommodation above
- Child Sexual Exploitation at all the premises
- Illicit alcohol checks: Sale of Hardy's Crest or Echo Falls white wine, sale of low cost branded spirits or 'over used' high end brand spirits on optics
- Customer satisfaction survey using the mobile App.

'Operation Bridge' (Stafford) February 2016

- 14 Food hygiene inspections
- 8 Hygiene Improvement Notices served

Other issues checked:

- Litter crawl
- Checking food hygiene ratings on display
- Child Sexual Exploitation at all the premises
- Disposal of waste / commercial waste contracts
- Pigeon roosting
- Food premise with living accommodation above - 2 premises with issues



NEW FOOD BUSINESS REGISTRATIONS:

- In 2015/16 we received **136** new food business registrations.
- We provided food safety advice and assistance for production of the Mayoral Honey.



- Identifying new businesses and updating our database has been a priority in 2015/16 for the Group and will continue.
- Staff have used the mobile app to enable food business registrations to be completed and updated on site. This was extensively used during the health and safety industrial estates surveys to update the food business register.

FOOD SAFETY WEEK

The Food and Safety team were at Morrison's in Stone and at Asda in Stafford during food safety week. Food safety information bags; which included a fridge thermometer, were given out along with 500 leaflets informing shoppers about the 2015 message 'Chicken Challenge', asking them to pledge to handle, store and cook chicken safely to prevent food poisoning and reduce cases of Campylobacter.

We tweeted the campaign's food safety messages during the week, issued a press release and one of the photos taken at Morrison's, Stone, was used on the Food Standard Agency's (FSA's) website.



FOOD SAFETY INCIDENTS



An inspection was carried out and food samples were taken from an ice cream business affected by the fire at Global Hygiene on Astonfields Industrial Estate, to ensure that the food was not contaminated.

The samples were satisfactory and after cleaning and disinfection of the unit and the ice cream vans and equipment, the business was ready to commence trading.

FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME

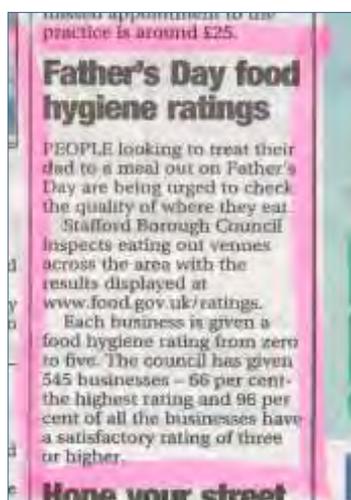


At the end of 2015/16 we had:

856 businesses with a food hygiene rating and 95% of these with a rating of 3 (generally satisfactory) or better.

Food Hygiene Rating	0	1	2	3	4	5
Number of businesses	3	28	15	113	152	545

Press releases and tweets focussed on highly relevant events and festivals such as Christmas, Fathers' Day, Valentine's Day and Mothers' day.



- We received 1 appeal which was not upheld.
- We received 6 formal re-rating requests from businesses. The number of these is increasing with more press coverage and the mandatory display of ratings now in Wales. We have started to check and record the number of businesses that display their rating.

FOOD – RELATED SERVICE REQUESTS: 609 including:

- alleged food poisoning 43
- food premises complaint 64
- food legislation enquiries 155
- new food business registration enquiries 186
- requests from businesses for health export certificates 62

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

We received 217 notifications including:

- Campylobacter: 163
- Salmonella: 18
- Cryptosporidium: 16
- Gairdia: 5
- Hepatitis E: 5
- E. coli 0157 : 4

JOINT WORKING WITH TRADING STANDARDS

Following our joint project work with Trading Standards, the Staffordshire and Shropshire Food Group project on advice and enforcement for businesses on new allergens requirements was reported in an article in the national *Environmental and Health News* July 2015.



Following the multi-agency food fraud investigation, the food business operator received a 2 year suspended prison sentence and his partner received a conditional discharge for 12 months in Stafford Crown Court in August 2015.

They were ordered to pay costs of £6000 to Staffordshire County Council who took the prosecution and the couple were banned from being directors of a company for 5 years. The business continues to trade in Stafford under a new name.

