

# Licensing and General Purposes Committee

## AGENDA

**DATE:** Monday 12 September 2011

**TIME:** 7.30 pm

**VENUE:** Committee Rooms 1 & 2,  
Harrow Civic Centre

### **MEMBERSHIP** (Quorum 4)

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**Chairman:** Councillor Mano Dharmarajah

**Councillors:**

David Gawn  
Thaya Idaikkadar  
Ajay Maru (VC)  
Varsha Parmar  
William Stoodley  
Krishna Suresh  
Ben Wealthy

Husain Akhtar  
Ramji Chauhan  
Susan Hall  
Manji Kara  
Amir Moshenson  
John Nickolay  
Yogesh Teli

### **Reserve Members:**

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1. Mrs Rekha Shah
2. Nizam Ismail
3. Phillip O'Dell
4. Sachin Shah
5. Ann Gate
6. Sue Anderson
7. Bill Phillips
8. Krishna James

1. Mrs Camilla Bath
2. Stephen Wright
3. -
4. Stephen Greek
5. Lynda Seymour
6. Anthony Seymour
7. Chris Mote

**Contact:** Vishal Seegoolam, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Tel: 020 8424 1883 E-mail: [vishal.seegoolam@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:vishal.seegoolam@harrow.gov.uk)

# **AGENDA - PART I**

## **1. ATTENDANCE BY RESERVE MEMBERS**

To note the attendance at this meeting of any duly appointed Reserve Members.

Reserve Members may attend meetings:-

- (i) to take the place of an ordinary Member for whom they are a reserve;
- (ii) where the ordinary Member will be absent for the whole of the meeting; and
- (iii) the meeting notes at the start of the meeting at the item 'Reserves' that the Reserve Member is or will be attending as a reserve;
- (iv) if a Reserve Member whose intention to attend has been noted arrives after the commencement of the meeting, then that Reserve Member can only act as a Member from the start of the next item of business on the agenda after his/her arrival.

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, arising from business to be transacted at this meeting, from:

- (a) all Members of the Committee;
- (b) all other Members present.

## **3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2011 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

## **4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

To receive questions (if any) from local residents/organisations under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 17 (Part 4B of the Constitution).

## **5. PETITIONS**

To receive petitions (if any) submitted by members of the public/Councillors under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4B of the Constitution).

## **6. DEPUTATIONS**

To receive deputations (if any) under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 16 (Part 4B) of the Constitution.

## **7. COMMERCIAL SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2011/12 (Pages 7 - 74)**

Report of the Divisional Director Environmental Services.

## **8. POLLING STATION REVIEW (Pages 75 - 80)**

Report of the Director of Legal and Governance Services.

# LICENSING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MINUTES

## 17 MAY 2011

**Chairman:** \* Councillor Mano Dharmarajah

**Councillors:**

* Husain Akhtar	† Chris Mote
† Ramji Chauhan	* John Nickolay
* David Gawn	* Varsha Parmar
* Susan Hall	* Bill Phillips (7)
* Krishna James (8)	* William Stoodley
† Manji Kara	* Yogesh Teli
* Ajay Maru	* Ben Wealthy

\* Denotes Member present  
(7) and (8) Denote category of Reserve Members  
† Denotes apologies received

### 50. Attendance by Reserve Members

**RESOLVED:** To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor Thaya Idaikkadar  
Councillor Krishna Suresh

Reserve Member

Councillor Bill Phillips  
Councillor Krishna James

## 51. Declarations of Interest

**RESOLVED:** To note that the following interests were declared:

### Agenda Item 4 – Academies - Employer Contribution Rates

Councillor Bill Phillips declared a prejudicial interest in that he was a governor at Harrow High School. He would leave the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Councillor John Nickolay declared a personal interest in that he was a member of the Aldgate Homes Association. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

## 52. Deputations

**RESOLVED:** To note that no deputations were received.

## RESOLVED ITEMS

## 53. Academies - Employer Contribution Rates

The Committee received a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which requested that Members consider the implications of the decision made in respect of Academies at the special Licensing and General Purposes Committees held on 11 and 19 April 2011. In particular, the Committee was asked to reconsider the decision made in relation to the deficit recovery period and the way in which the deficit would be calculated.

The Chairman informed Members that headteachers had contacted the Council following the meetings in April and had raised concerns that the decision taken by the Committee would limit the ability of schools to achieve academy status. The headteachers were particularly concerned that the Committee had decided upon a seven year deficit recovery period and the inclusion of deferred and current pensioners, as well as active members, in the calculation of employer contribution rates.

The Council's Principal Laywer stated that the seven schools seeking academy status had formally requested that the Committee reconsider its decision and that the Chairman had agreed to this request. She stated that the Committee now had access to new information and that a representative of the Council's actuary, Hymans Robertson, was in attendance to help Members better understand the financial implications of any potential decision.

The Interim Director of Finance stated that the Committee had previously been concerned that the Secretary of State would only guarantee academy funding for 7 years. However, it was now understood that the funding agreement with the Department for Education (DfE) was a rolling contract, with a 7 year notice termination clause.

Members agreed that it would be beneficial for the representative of Hymans Robertson to outline the key issues. The representative outlined the following key points:

- the concept of academies had been introduced by the coalition government and subsequently set out in the Academies Act (2010). Unlike community schools, academies were financially autonomous and not subject to local authority control. Significantly, academies were responsible for their own pension arrangements;
- teaching staff were not covered by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and therefore any decision made in relation to the deficit recovery period or calculation of employer contribution rates for academies was only applicable to non-teaching staff;
- the DfE briefing note had stated that each academy would have a separate employer contribution rate set by the administering pension authority and would have responsibility for a share of the LGPS deficit, however it did not state how this share should be calculated;
- when calculating employer contribution rates, actuaries had to take into account both accrued benefits and future service rates;
- there were two different approaches that could be used to determine the share of the deficit contribution. The first approach was to make academies only responsible for a share of the deficit that applied to LGPS staff that transferred to the academy. The second approach was to make the academies responsible for a share of the whole Council deficit and attributable to deferred and pensioner members;
- the current officer recommendation was to utilise the second approach and apply a share of the whole Council deficit to academies. Due to the fact that a proportion of the Council's employer contribution rate went towards payments of current and future liabilities for deferred and pensioner members, it was reasonable to allocate a share of these liabilities to the academies. This approach recognised that the Council would lose funding in respect of the provision of education services but would remain responsible for the pension liabilities of former education staff whose benefits would not transfer to an academy.

Following questions from Members, the Hymans Robertson representative clarified the following points:

- when a member of the LGPS died, death benefits would be paid to the surviving family. Up until 1 August 2011, all ex-employee benefits would remain the responsibility of the Council. If an employee died after this date, these benefits would be the responsibility of the academy;
- assets were valued using market rates;

- whilst external economic and political factors had the potential to impact on the actuarial calculations, spreading the deficit repayments over a 20 year period would help smooth out any variances. Whilst the private sector normally used a spread period of 7 or 8 years, public sector organisations would continue to exist in some form and there was therefore less risk of spreading repayments over a longer period. A spread period of 20 years was therefore common. There would be a revaluation of the fund every 3 years to reassess the size of the deficit and performance of the fund;
- contribution rate to be set by the Committee related to the employer's contribution only. Employee contribution rates were set out in regulations and would not be affected by any decision;
- if an academy or the DfE instigated the 7 year termination clause, the Council could reassess the contribution rate and shorten the deficit recovery period, thereby increasing the contribution rate. Although unlikely, if an academy simply ceased to operate the Council would have to absorb any outstanding deficit. However, before this occurred, it was likely that the Secretary of State would attempt to address any management deficiencies to prevent a financial collapse. If the academy was taken over by another operator, the new operator would take over responsibility for payment of the deficit.

A Member stated that it was unlikely that the schools would dissolve, he thanked the actuary for a very comprehensive presentation and stated that a 20 year spread period seemed to be a good proposition. A Member stated that academies were likely to find the first few years quite challenging and that the Council had a duty to ensure they were supported. Spreading the deficit recovery period over 20 years would give new academies the opportunity to develop their business model without added financial pressure.

The Hymans Robertson representative clarified the impact on the Council if all schools decided to convert to academies. If only active members' liabilities were used to calculate the deficit share, the Council's theoretical employer contribution rate would increase by 0.25% of pay. However, if all schools converted on this basis, this rate would increase to 1% of pay. The Hymans Robertson representative stated that, for the sake of consistency, it might be prudent to consider this impact now.

The Interim Director of Finance referred to each of the points raised in the letter from the schools and the responses addressed in the report. In particular, she referred to the additional information Members had in relation to affordability, the reasons for including deferred and pensioner liabilities in the calculation of the share of the deficit and the justification for a 7 or 20 year spread period.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) a deficit recovery period of 20 years be used to recover the share of deficit allocated to each academy;

- (2) the 20 year recovery period only be applicable for as long as the academy or DfE does not give notice of exiting its status;
- (3) on receiving 7 years notice of exiting academy status, the outstanding deficit be spread over the remainder of the notice period and the contribution rate be recalculated with effect from the start of the following financial year;
- (4) the Committee reserve its position regarding the actuarial basis to be used for the recalculation;
- (5) the share of the deficit to be transferred to the schools be calculated based on the liabilities of current LGPS staff who transfer to the academy and the estimated liability for deferred and pensioner members formally employed by the former maintained school;
- (6) resolutions 1, 2, 3 and 7 from the previous Licensing and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 11 and 19 April remain the same.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.50 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MANO DHARMARAJAH  
Chairman

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**REPORT FOR:            Licensing and General  
                                 Purposes Committee**

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**Date of Meeting:**            12 September 2011

**Subject:**                      Commercial Safety Service Plan  
   2011/12

**Responsible Officer:**      John Edwards - Divisional Director –  
   Environmental Services

**Exempt:**                        No

**Enclosures:**                 Commercial Safety Service Plan

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

By virtue of the requirements contained in the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and statutory guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Council is required have an annual service plan in place in relation to its health and safety work.

**Recommendations:**

The Licensing and General Purposes Committee is requested to consider and approve the Commercial Safety Service Plan for 2011/12 as the Council's health and safety plan for 2011/12. The food service aspects of the Plan are subject to approval by Cabinet.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **2.1 Introduction & Background**

- 2.1.1. Harrow Council is committed through its commercial safety team to ensure that:
- a. The health, safety and welfare of people at work is protected, and to safeguard others, mainly members of the public, who may be exposed to risks from the way work is carried out.
  - b. food and drink intended for sale for human consumption, which is produced, stored, distributed, handled or consumed within the London Borough of Harrow (the ‘Council’) is without risk to the health or safety of the consumer; and
- 2.1.2. The Council has statutory duties under Health & Safety and Food Safety legislation for providing an inspection and enforcement service. The Health & Safety Executive and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) monitor the Council’s enforcement activities.
- 2.1.3. Requirements state that the Council must show commitment to delivering a health & safety service within their area. The approval of the service plan provides steps towards this by agreeing the work the “enforcing” authority carries out.
- 2.1.4 The attached service plan is drafted in the format required by the HSE and the FSA and in accordance with guidance and includes: the service provided, service standards and performance, targets and a statement of variances against the previous years plan.

### **3.1 Options considered**

- 3.1.1. As noted above, the Council is expected to have a service plan that meets the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the requirements of the HSE. The options are to approve the plan as currently written or to make appropriate changes, whilst still following the requirements.

### **4.1 Current situation**

- 4.1.1 A food service plan has been produced annually since 1999. Following guidance issued in 2010 there is now a requirement for a similar plan for health and safety enforcement and inspection aspects too. The Commercial Safety Service Plan is the first combined plan.

### **5.1 Why a change is needed**

- 5.1.1 The food service plan is required annually. Following the internal merger of the food and health & safety teams, and the requirement

for a health & safety service plan, it is considered appropriate to have a single plan that covers both aspects.

## **6.1 Resources, costs and risks**

- 6.1.1 Failure to have an approved plan in place puts the Council at risk of failing HSE audits and potential sanctions associated with it.
- 6.1.2 The past 4 years have seen reductions in the number of officers in the Council's Environmental Health service and the corresponding salary savings have been given up as savings in prior years. This has had an impact, on the food safety and health and safety teams, and has been managed through improved partnerships with the HSE, other enforcing authorities and reduction in delivering non statutory duties. To improve efficiency further we have amalgamated the teams and a planned restructure to replace a senior post with two lower level posts. This will increase capacity for less technically demanding duties. The changes will be within existing budget limits.
- 6.1.3 We will continue to target our actions and ensure that we deliver on the statutory functions and requirements. Non statutory areas of work will be dealt with by way of alternative strategies.

## **7.1 Staffing and workforce**

- 7.1.1 The HSE Section 18 Standard states "The Enforcing Authority must have sufficient managerial, political, legal and administrative capacity to comply with the Section 18 Standard. Such capacity includes the ability to put in place and maintain levels of resource compliant with the requirement to make adequate arrangements for enforcement and ensure the plan is delivered". With the changes proposed in 6.1.2 the service will be able to meet the objectives set out in the plan.
- 7.1.2 The service plan sets out the councils Health & Safety work and food safety work programme. The programme includes the reassessment of approximately 2,500 premises which have historically only ever been subject to "desk top" assessment. The resource required is not fully quantifiable. Initial indications show that approximately a quarter of these (c600 premises) will need to be visited which may impact on our overall ability to meet all aspects of the plan. This will not affect our ability to complete the statutory workload.

## **8.1 Equalities Impact considerations**

- 8.1.1 A separate equalities impact screening assessment has been completed for this report. The screening assessment concluded that a full assessment was not necessary as the differential impact was low.

## **9.1 Financial Implications**

- 9.1.1 There is no additional financial implication in approving this policy for either the current budget plans or for the Medium Term Budget Strategy.
- 9.1.2 The structure of the team may change within the budget constraints to maximise field officers and increase capacity. No additional finance will be required for this.

## **10.1 Performance Issues**

- 10.1.1 The work detailed in this plan does not require a return on a National Indicator (NI) and do not directly impact on any of the Councils NI targets.
- 10.1.2 The commercial safety service is subject to periodic auditing by the FSA and HSE. Failure to demonstrate compliance with the Framework Agreement and or Section 18 guidance would result in adverse reporting. An extreme sanction would be for the FSA or the HSE to remove the Council's enforcement powers in these areas.
- 10.1.3 In the event that this plan is not approved, it will mean that the Council will be acting contrary to the HSE and FSA requirements. The HSE and FSA after consultation can direct a Council to comply with the requirements. An extreme sanction would be for the HSE to remove the Councils H&S or food safety enforcement powers.

## **11.1 Environmental Impact**

- 11.1.1 The policy is not expected to have any significant direct positive or negative effect on the environment although the amalgamation of Health and Safety enforcement duties will mean that there will be a reduction in business journeys made by officers.
- 11.1.2 Approving this policy does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

## **12.1 Risk Management Implications**

- 12.1.1 This plan is not included on the Directorate or any other corporate risk register.

## **13.1 Corporate Priorities**

13.1.1 The Council's four priorities are detailed in the Year Ahead Statement 2011/12. The Commercial Safety Service Plan links with these:

- a. Keeping neighbourhoods clean, green and safe: Fundamentally, the plan covers food safety and health & safety of the community, as well as the public health agenda.
- b. United and Involved Communities: The service plan sets out statutory inspection and enforcement actions, but includes pro-active health promotion and training opportunities for the community.
- c. Supporting and protecting people who are most in need: The plan covers all in its intention to protect people, including those that are vulnerable such as the elderly, the young and the sick.
- d. Supporting our town centre, our local shopping centres and businesses: The plan aims to ensure that all relevant businesses work to the required standards.

13.1.2 Proposed changes to the National Health Service (NHS) transferring decision making and other powers in respect of Public Health are currently in transition. These changes will involve the transfer of the Director of Public Health post from the NHS to Councils. Councils and other stakeholders will establish partnerships in an effort to improve the national health and wellbeing agenda, to drive down workplace accident rates reduce obesity and provide better understanding around food quality and food labeling. It is uncertain how this might impact on the commercial safety service. If we are to engage in this important aspect of our work it is likely, certainly in the next few years, place extra demand on already stretched services.

### **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

Name: Kanta Hirani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 31 August 2011		
Name: Sarah Wilson	<input type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date: 31 August 2011		

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Taiq Chowdry, Service Manager Community Safety Service,  
020 8736 6236 (6236)

**Background Papers:** List **only non-exempt** documents (ie not Private and Confidential/Part II documents) relied on to a material extent in preparing the report (eg previous reports). Where possible also include a web link to the documents.

# Community Safety Services **Commercial Safety** **Service Plan**

**2011/12**



*Produced to comply with the requirements of the "The Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement" issued by the Food Standards Agency and the HSE's Section 18 Standard, 'Making a difference'*



## FORWARD

“Improving health in the workplace is a national enforcement priority due to the high risks posed to individuals, their families, business and the costs to the economy.”

**National enforcement priorities for local authority regulatory services (Rogers Review 2007)**

Annually, the economic cost of health and safety ill health incidents in Harrow is **£30.2 million**, with the estimated cost for accidents of an additional **£14.9 million**. In 2009/10, there were 36 fatal and major injuries to employees working in the Borough of Harrow, **27,944 working days** lost due to work-related ill health and **8,471 working days** lost to work-related injury. Therefore, the relevance of health and safety to safeguarding the Boroughs economy and health is of utmost importance.<sup>1</sup>

Annually, food poisoning costs the UK economy over **£1.5 billion** (including costs to the health care system). With an estimated 850,500 cases of food borne disease (2.328 per day), 12,000 hospitalisations (33 per day) and 329 deaths (almost 1 death per day), it is an area that can ill afford to be overlooked<sup>2</sup>. To put it in perspective, if this is divided on a population basis, it is the equivalent of the London Borough of Harrow suffering **2,833 cases**, 40 hospitalisations and 1 death per year at a cost to the Harrow economy of **£5 million**.

The Environmental Health Commercial Safety Team, within Community Safety Services, is responsible for:

- The protection of the **health, safety and welfare** of people at work, and to safeguard the public and non-employees who may be exposed to risks from the way work is carried out.
- the prevention and investigation of matters related to **food safety and standards** within the Borough

The role and responsibilities of the Local Authority, under the guise of the “Food Authority” and “Lead Authority” respectively, are set down in legislation as well as:

- The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) Section 18 Standard, “Making a Difference” (September 2010).
- The Food Standards Agency (FSA) Food Law Code of Practice (June 2008).

Enforcement under these is subject to better regulation, as advocated by Government and regard is also given to the Hampton Agenda, the Rogers Review and the Local Better Regulation Office.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE), requires all enforcement authorities in the England and Wales to put in place an Annual Intervention Plan, showing the Councils priorities especially in terms of interventions. This Service Plan is drawn up in accordance with guidance issued by the Executive and contained in the Section 18 Guidance. Every Council in the UK has a statutory duty under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to ensure it makes **adequate provision** for health and safety regulation in its area<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Health and Safety Executive, Breakdown of London Borough 2009-10

<sup>2</sup> Food Standards Agency, [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)

<sup>3</sup> Section 18 Guidance, HSE September 2010



“The hygiene of food businesses is a national enforcement priority because of the high impact in terms of numbers of deaths and ill health caused by unhygienic food businesses and the high costs to the economy.”

**National enforcement priorities for local authority regulatory services  
(Rogers Review 2007)**

The Food Standards Agency (FSA), under powers contained in the Food Standards Act 1999 requires all enforcement authorities in the England and Wales to put in place an Annual Food Service Plan. This Service Plan is drawn up in accordance with guidance issued by the Agency and contained in the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement.

Every Council in the UK has a statutory duty under the Food Law Code of Practice (issued under the Food Safety Act 1990 as amended and Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 to ensure it makes **adequate provision** for food safety and standards regulation in its area

This Plan is an important part of the process to ensure that national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered in a way that also meets local needs.

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# 1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

## Aims and Objectives

### Aims

- To ensure that food and drink produced, purchased and / or consumed in the Borough is safe and without risks to health
- To protect the health, safety and welfare of people at work, and to safeguard others, mainly members of the public, who may be exposed to risks from the way work is carried out.

### Objectives

- To meet the 'standard' set out in the Framework Agreement on Food Law Enforcement issued by the Food Standards Agency
- To meet the 'standard' set out in Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and official requirements as set out by the HSE
- To contribute to the Community Safety Services service plan by assisting the Council to achieve its priorities, through the principles of performance, partnership and participation

## Government Priorities

**“Ensure a safe, healthy and sustainable food chain for the benefits of consumers and the rural economy”**

**“Help People to live healthier lives by preventing ill health and harm and promoting public health”**

**LBRO, A New Approach to Refreshing the National Enforcement Priorities for Local Authority Regulatory Services**

In February 2011, the Government set out its priorities in terms of regulatory outcomes within the paper “A New Approach to Refreshing the National Enforcement Priorities for Local Authority Regulatory Services”. This strengthened the position adopted in the 2007 Rogers Review of Regulatory Services, putting food safety and health & safety at the forefront of regulation in terms of importance.

**“There can be few areas of public policy where the positive benefits to lives, health and wellbeing are potentially as dramatic as they could be in diet and nutrition”**

**“Food: an analysis of the issues”, Cabinet Office Study**

The Local Government White Paper on prosperous and strong communities sets out the Government’s priorities, including tackling public health, health protection and disease prevention through the need to change the culture of communities. These form the fundamental workings of the Commercial Safety Team and are reflected within this Service Plan.

**“Good health and safety is vitally important”**

**David Cameron, Lord Young Report into Health & Safety**

The Lord Young report, published October 2010, advocated the importance of health and safety but based on risk not “compensation culture”. Resources to be targeted at high risk, and low risk businesses freed from unnecessary bureaucracy.

## **Regional Priorities**

**“To ensure a safe and successful Games and deliver a genuine and lasting legacy”**

**Government, 2011**

In 2012, London hosts the Olympic Games, with the eyes of the World focused on it. All London Authorities, including Harrow, have a part to play to ensure that health and safety is at the forefront of these games and takes this forward into the future.

**“Environmental health officers have essential roles to play in improving and protecting population health and reducing health inequalities”**

**Healthy Lives, Healthy People, Public Health White Paper**

The Commercial Safety Service is involved in food, food safety, food standards, infectious diseases and health promotion, which are all integral to improving public health. Through these areas, the Service impact communities, business, visitors and residents, throughout Harrow.

## **Council Priorities**

**“Supporting our Town Centre, our local shopping centres and businesses.”**

**Harrow Council Corporate Priorities 2011-2012**

The four Council priorities are detailed in the Year Ahead Statement 2011/12 issued by Harrow Council. The Commercial Safety Service Plan links with these, in particular “Supporting our Town Centre, Our Local Shopping Centres and Businesses”. There are also clear links to “supporting and protecting people who are most in need”, “keeping neighbourhoods clean, green and safe” and “united and involved communities”.

The Commercial Safety Service is also linked to the key themes of Harrow’s Year Ahead initiatives including health & wellbeing, education and improved environment.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### Profile of Harrow

Harrow is an outer London Borough in northwest London and approximately 10 miles from central London. Covering 50 square kilometres (20 square miles) Harrow is the 12th largest borough in Greater London in terms of area, but 22nd in terms of size of population with 214,600 people. It is one of the most diverse boroughs in the UK, with 41% of the population classified as ethnic minority. 20% of the borough is composed of parkland and open spaces.

There are approximately 5,000 commercial premises, of which approximately 3,575 are the responsibility of Officers within the Commercial Safety Team. A further 1,200 commercial premises fall within the Health and Safety Executive inspection regime. Approximately 86% of employment in Harrow is within the Service industry.

### Characteristics of Local Commercial Businesses

The Harrow business sector is made up of mainly small and medium enterprises, with a high proportion of food businesses being owner operated by members of the ethnic minority populations within Harrow, reflecting the vibrant and diverse communities within the area.

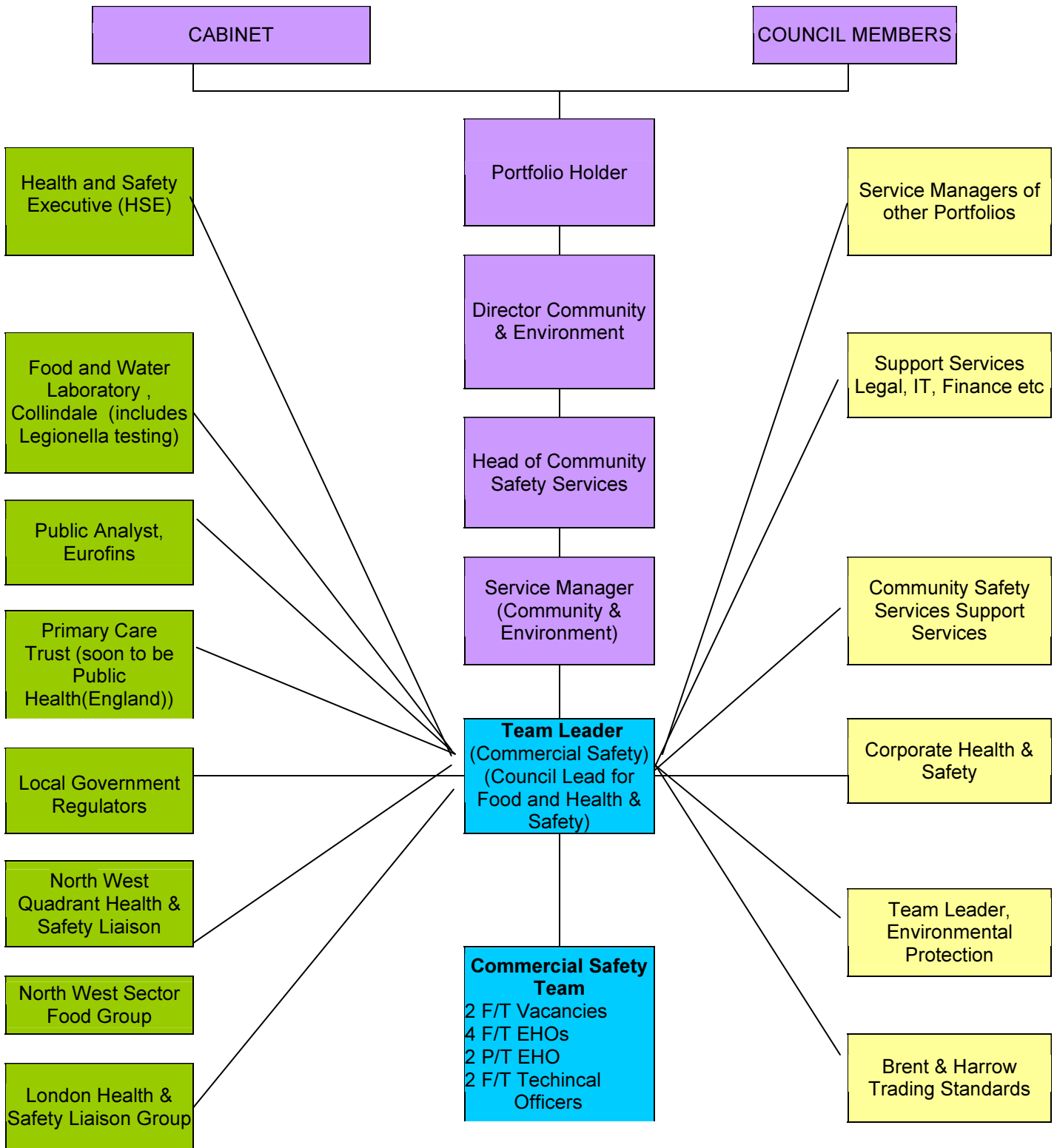
**Bakkavor**, a large manufacturer of pizza bases and finished pizzas have a production facility near Wealdstone, which supplies pizzas for a number of the main supermarkets.

The Borough is host to the Head Office of **Spar UK Ltd**, the chain of independent food retailers, and Harrow Food Safety Service is the national (Home Authority) contact for Spar in terms of food safety and standards issues. Harrow is also the location of **Pharmadass plc**, an independent packer and national distributor of food supplements.

These businesses and a number of smaller importers result in a higher food standards (labelling, composition, etc.) workload than is typical for the range of retail premises in the area. The Borough is Home Authority for 16 businesses.

**Wickes**, a large national DIY chain, have their head office based in Harrow and the Commercial Safety Team is the national (Lead) authority contact for them in terms of all health and safety issues. While the head office of **Homebase** is situated outside of Harrow, the Commercial Safety Team also acts as the national (Lead) authority contact for them in terms of all health and safety issues

**Organisational Structure**



Commercial Safety Section

External Partners

Internal Partners

Management Reporting Line

## The Scope of the Commercial Safety Service

**“Dodgy business people are going to be around forever and a day. And the only thing protecting the public against them is environmental health practitioners”**

**Professor Pennington, Report into the Wales E.Coli Outbreak 2009**

The Commercial Safety Service is delivered by a team of professional and technical staff and carries out the following statutory functions:-

- Programmed food safety/hygiene, food standards and health & safety inspections
- Food complaint and hygiene complaint investigations & response to Food Alerts
- Health & safety complaint and accident investigations
- Maintain a register of cooling towers and evaporative condensers in the borough
- Respond to requests for advice and information / new business visits
- Communicable Disease and Legionella investigations
- Delivering sampling of food and drink in line with Local, Regional and National Sampling plans
- Make representations to the Licensing Authority as the Responsible Authority for health & safety regarding applications for premise licences under the Licensing Act 2003
- Investigation of statutory nuisance and drainage issues from commercial premises

Harrow is part of a consortium with the London Borough of Brent for the provision of Trading Standards Services. With the exception of the sampling of alcoholic drinks the Trading Standards Service is not responsible for food standards matters in the borough's food premises; the Commercial Safety Service principally undertakes these.

The Food Safety Service provides training opportunities for local food businesses in line with the Council priority of supporting local businesses. Accredited through two professional bodies, the team offers an extensive range of training courses to food businesses including courses leading to accredited food hygiene and health & safety qualifications.

In line with good practice, the Commercial Safety Service works on the principle one officer, one premise with the officer carrying out food safety, standards and health and safety enforcement within that premise. Exceptions are when specialists are required due to an identified risk.

**“There are undoubtedly efficiency savings to be achieved by combining both food safety and health & safety roles, and some authorities are already doing this.”**

**Lord Young, “Common Sense, Common Safety” 2010**



## Demands on the Commercial Safety Service

The biggest demand on the Service is the statutory interventions programme covering approximately 3575 businesses in the Borough, for Food Hygiene, Food Standards and Health & Safety:

<b>Food Hygiene Inspections: (1005 Due 2011-2012)</b>			
<b>Risk Rating</b>	<b>Number of Premises</b>	<b>Inspection Interval</b>	<b>Number of Inspections Due 2011-2012</b>
A	8	6 months	16
B	84	12 months	84
C	608	18 months	479
D	200	24 months	144
E	310	Alternative Enforcement <sup>a</sup>	160
OTHER	122	-	122
<b>Food Standards Inspections: (481 Due 2011-2012)</b>			
<b>Risk Rating</b>	<b>Number of Premises</b>	<b>Inspection Interval</b>	<b>Number of Inspections Due 2011-2012</b>
A	2	12 months	2
B	154	24 months	65
C	1028	Alternative Enforcement <sup>a</sup>	288
OTHER	126	-	126
<b>Health &amp; Safety Inspections: (361 Due 2011-2012)</b>			
<b>Risk Rating</b>	<b>Number of Premises</b>	<b>Inspection Interval</b>	<b>Number of Inspections Due 2011-2012</b>
A	15	12 months	15
B1	91	18 months	44
B2	418	Alternative Intervention <sup>b</sup>	5
C	2902	Alternative Enforcement <sup>a</sup>	-
OTHER	297	-	297

<sup>a</sup> These premises will not all require a physical inspection, though at least a 10% sample will be spot checked on return of the alternative enforcement questionnaire to ensure they are complying.

<sup>b</sup> These premises will be subject to physical intervention every 5 years

**A list of areas covered by the Commercial Safety Team is listed in Appendix 4 for reference.**

## Service Delivery Points

The Council's commercial safety service is based at the council's Forward Drive Depot site, located near Wealdstone. All visitors to the service are generally accommodated at Harrow Civic Centre. The Council operates flexible working for its core staff, from 8 am to 7 pm and advice on food and health & safety issues is available either by telephone or to personal callers between 9 am and 5.00 pm. Officers can be contacted by direct-dial numbers, by email or through Access Harrow. If there is a need for advice of a specialist nature or concerning a specific issue, it is advisable to make an appointment with the relevant officer.

The Civic Centre also operates a One Stop Shop, whereby members of the public can visit and get advice or be put through to relevant Officers.

## **Out of Hours Contact (including Emergencies)**

The Council can be contacted through the switchboard number (020 8863 5611) out of hours. In terms of emergencies, being food poisoning outbreaks or major / fatal accidents for instance, a rota is in place whereby any such incident would be reported via the switchboard, and on to the emergency contact numbers held by them.

Emergency details are also held by the Food Standards Agency and the Health and Safety Executive.

General enquiries can be made out of hours using the Councils website ([www.harrow.gov.uk](http://www.harrow.gov.uk))

## **External Factors Impacting on the Service**

This economic climate will impact on the resources available within the Business Sector, with a likely increase in premise turnover / closure (see Section 3.1 for current estimates). Additionally, Officers are already seeing premises cutting costs including training, structure and staff that could increase the risk of non-compliance to statutory requirements and lead to a detrimental change to the Borough's Scores on the Doors profile in terms of food safety.

Harrow is also recognised as being one of the most diverse authorities (41% of the population is ethnic) that, while being positive in terms of cultural mix, has a direct impact on the work of the food safety section due to a large ethnic food premise mix where English is not the first language. This can present barriers to compliance that need to be overcome through close working with the businesses which does have an impact on time, which adds additional pressure on staff availability.

A corresponding impact of such ethnic diversity, especially the Indian continent, is that Harrow has seen over the past few years a dramatic rise in Typhoid cases especially towards the end of summer as families return from holiday. As part of the service statutory function, this results in the diversion of resources to the investigation and control of cases (which also incorporates all contacts within the household).

## **Forthcoming Challenges**

This year will again provide a number of challenges, on top of the statutory requirements. The commercial safety service's objectives for the year to April 2012 include:

- To expand the Health Promotion agenda, through partnership working and incorporation into the Inspection programme. To include active participation in the Council's Health and Well Being Agenda.
- To improve working with the Council's Place Shaping Directorate to reduce the business premise turnover within the Borough and provide stability within communities.
- To produce a food safety management guide to enable businesses to comply to at least a basic level of compliance with the requirements. This is to be aimed at small independent food premises that do not have easy access to, or finances for employing, professional advice.
- To assess the health & safety premises that have been subject to desktop risk rating in the past that may need to be bought back into the intervention programme.
- To continue to expand the surveillance of the bacteriological quality of food by building on the previous year's sampling activity. The aim being to increase the number of bacteriological samples taken in a structured and focussed manner and thus make the best use of Harrow's allocation from the Health Protection Agency
- To carry out proactive surveillance, to check on the legality of products of animal origin sold within the Borough, especially in terms of those imported from outside of the EU
- To further develop alternative enforcement strategies for lowest risk premises in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice issued in June 2008 and HSE LAC 67/2 Guidance.
- To deliver a minimum of 12 (paid for) accredited training sessions to the business community
- To continue with the London wide Scores on the Doors scheme.
- To continue to work with the Health & Safety Executive in delivering focused outcomes linked to national priorities through project work
- To increase partnership working with other enforcement agencies to achieve targets and to work towards national, regional and local goals.
- To improve public health work within the community, working with Public Health Consultants

## **Enforcement Policy**

**“It is small food producers/processors in Britain that have the greatest difficulty in achieving and maintaining the safety standards that are required to prevent the contamination of ready-to-eat products with E.coli 0157. There should be no relaxation of regulation for them. The opposite should be the case”**

**Pennington Inquiry Report, 2009**

The Commercial Safety Service, in line with all Enforcement Teams, must comply with the requirements of the Regulator’s Compliance Code being the need for an open, targeted, proportionate and consistent approach to enforcement.

The Food Law Code of Practice, issued by the Food Standard Agency, requires the Food Safety Service to have an Enforcement Policy in place that covers the areas of Enforcement as stated within the Code. Additionally, the Health & Safety Executive require that the Local Authority has in place an Enforcement Policy setting out the principles as defined within the Section 18 Guidance.

In 2010, the Council approved a Food Safety Enforcement Policy. As of September 2010, with the introduction of the new HSE Section 18 Guidance, Health & Safety enforcement requires specific mention within an approved enforcement policy. Therefore, a new combined food safety and health & safety Enforcement Policy has been drafted, which is currently awaiting approval before it becomes effective, and this incorporates statutory requirements as set down by the Compliance Code, the Food Law Code of Practice and Section 18 Guidance.

Recent case law (*Wandsworth-v-Rashid 2009 EWHC*) confirmed that Local Authorities should have regard to their enforcement policies to guide decision makers, promote consistency and equity of treatment, but need not be solely driven by it in its enforcement decisions. Deviations away from the Enforcement Policy therefore may occur, but the reasons for this will be documented and approved by an appropriate manager should it be necessary.

### 3. SERVICE DELIVERY

This section breaks down the main statutory functions of the Commercial Safety Service, setting out last years achievements and the 2011-12 estimated targets. A breakdown of the resource implication in terms of inspections and resulting revisits is given in **Appendix 6**.

As part of the move towards contributing to the Public Health agenda, all services provided by the Commercial Safety Team are being subjected to a Health Impact Assessment as devised by the Public Health Team (currently within the PCT until 2012)

#### **Food Hygiene Premises Inspections**

The Commercial Safety Service undertakes primary food hygiene and food standards inspections as described in paragraph 4.1.2 of the Food Law Code of Practice. In 2011/2012, **883** primary food hygiene inspections are due in categories A to E. This represents an **8%** decrease over last year's numbers. This is mainly due to the enforcement action of the team increasing compliance amongst premises for reasons described in Section 2.8

Category D and E premises (lowest risk categories) will not be subject to a regular inspection regime, as permitted by the Food Law Code of Practice. Alternative strategies will be used to address standards in these risk categories. This will include the periodic provision of information, information cards and self-assessment questionnaires, together with advised strategies from the FSA or Local Government Regulators (LGR).

In addition the inspection or survey of a further 122 vacant, new or otherwise unclassified premises are programmed. Using past data, there is also likely to be a **10%** turnover of premises that will require some form of intervention (c125 premises)

2010/2011 continued to see a steady stream of Childminders registering with the Local Authority in terms of food, due to the publication of FSA detailed guidance. Childminders were previously exempt. An internal policy has been introduced regarding interventions to prevent unnecessary burden on these premises, including a newsletter sent to all 178 childminders on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010.

#### **Food Standards Premises Inspections**

Food Standards inspections cover quality, labelling and composition of food and are rated differently to food hygiene inspections, but where possible, these will be carried out at the same time as food hygiene inspections. In 2011/2012, 355 primary food standards inspections are due. This represents a **2%** decrease over last year's numbers

Due to resource implications, category C premises (lowest risk category) will not be subject to a regular inspection regime as permitted by the Food Standards Agency's Code of Practice. Alternative strategies will be used to address standards in this risk category.

This will include the periodic provision of information, information cards and self-assessment questionnaires, together with advised strategies from the FSA or LGRS.

In addition the inspection or survey of a further **126** vacant or otherwise unclassified premises are programmed.

## **Health and Safety Premises Inspections**

The Commercial Safety Section is responsible for enforcing the Health and Safety legislation in approximately 3,575 commercial premises ranging from newsagents to large multi-national DIY businesses. Businesses run from residential premises are within the remit of the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). Distinction between Local Authority and HSE premises is clearly laid out within the Health & Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1998.

In 2010, the risk rating system for health and safety changed, resulting in it going from 6 categories (A, B1, B2, B3, B4 and C) to 4 (A, B1, B2, C). As a result, more premises fell within the “C” category low risk category allowing alternative intervention. Details of the new risk rating “priority” scheme is available within the HSE Guidance LAC 67/2.

In 2011/2012, 54 primary inspections are due in categories A to B2.

Category C premises (lowest risk categories) will not be subject to a regular inspection regime, as permitted by LAC 67/2. Alternative strategies will be used to address standards in this risk category. This will include the periodic provision of information, information cards and self-assessment questionnaires, together with advised strategies from the HSE or Local Government Regulators (LGR).

In addition the inspection or survey of a further **297** vacant, new or otherwise unclassified premises are programmed. Using past data, there is also likely to be a **10%** turnover of premises that will require some form of intervention (c125 premises)

On top of the above inspections due, there has in the course of the last 6 years been approximately 2500 desk top risk ratings that need to be assessed to see if they need to be bought back into the intervention programme.

## **Commercial Premises Revisits**

Secondary inspections of food premises as described in paragraph 4.1.3 of the Code of Practice are undertaken where, for example, conditions are found to be unsatisfactory at the primary inspection and a further visit is warranted, or for the purposes of sampling or training of food handlers, or in circumstances where notices have been served to ensure that the statutory requirements have been complied with. The same principles will apply to revisits for health & safety purposes.

In order to engage and maintain a change in culture within premises, revisits are carried out on all but the highest compliant premises after inspections. Last year secondary inspections were made to approximately **194** premises.

As an aid to consistent action by officers, guidance on secondary inspections is provided in the Commercial Quality Manual Document. As described, revisits will be focused and prioritised to ensure that businesses are not overburdened by visits.

### **Feeding Stuffs Inspections**

The Food Safety Service is responsible for animal feeding stuff, and subsequent inspections. At present, Harrow has no feeding stuff producing premises, but host the head offices of approximately three (3) feed manufacturers / distributors.

### **Food, Feeding Stuffs and Premises Complaints**

The commercial safety service investigates various complaints concerning food and feeding stuffs that are suspected of being unfit, adulterated, out of condition, contain foreign objects or are incorrectly labelled. It also investigates complaints about hygiene conditions at individual food premises. The service performance standard is to respond to all such complaints within 5 working days of receipt. The Council will raise relevant issues with manufacturers, importers and/or retailers of the foodstuffs in order to confirm any possible offences and relevant defences. Officers will respond to complainants, keeping them informed of action taken, details of the investigation and the outcome.

In 2010/11, **159** food related complaints were investigated

### **Health and Safety Complaints**

The commercial safety service investigates various complaints concerning health, safety and welfare within the work place, affecting employees, public and contractors. The service performance standard is to respond to all such complaints within 5 working days of receipt. Officers will respond to complainants, keeping them informed of action taken, details of the investigation and the outcome.

In 2010/11, **99** health & safety complaints were investigated

### **Accident Investigations**

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) place a legal duty on employers, self-employed people and people in control of premises to report work-related deaths, major injuries or over-three-day injuries, work related diseases, and dangerous occurrences (near miss accidents). This is reported through a national Incident Contact Centre (ICC). All accidents related to premises within the London Borough of Harrow, and enforced by the Local Authority, are then passed to the Commercial Safety Team for investigation. RIDDOR is currently being consulted on, to determine whether the “over-3-day” injuries should move to “over-7-day”

Investigations shall take into account Council policy as well as HSE and LGR guidance, especially related to work-related fatalities. Primary enforcement responsibility for an accident scene rests with the Enforcing Authority when no criminal activity as enforced by the Police has taken place.

In 2010/11, **88** accidents were investigated

## **Home Authority Principle ( See appendix 9)**

Harrow is an active contributor to the Home Authority Principle and is currently Home Authority for 16 businesses. Three national companies, Spar plc, Bakkavor and Pharmadass plc, have head offices or significant production facilities in the borough that entail regular home authority work. Additionally there are a number of small importers in the borough that have a range of labelling and other matters that require periodic resolution. Spar plc is a national retailer and the large number of Spar branded foods makes it appropriate to hold regular meetings with the Company.

The principle of Primary Authorities has been assessed, and the companies have opted to maintain the status quo. Primary Authorities would require contractual obligations from both parties, and have a detrimental resource implication on the Council and the Businesses.

## **Lead Authority Principle (See appendix 9)**

Harrow is an active contributor to the Lead Authority Principle and is currently Lead Authority for two national companies; Homebase and Wickes, which have head offices or significant facilities in the borough that entail regular lead authority work. Additionally, advice is given on an informal basis to Spar plc as a national retailer.

The principle of Primary Authorities (where a formal agreement is in place) has been assessed, and the companies have opted to maintain the status quo of maintaining a more informal flexible approach. Primary Authorities would require contractual obligations from both parties, and have a detrimental resource implication on the Council and the Businesses.

## **Approved Premises**

Under the EC Regulation 853/2004, premises that produce products of animal origin using raw meat/dairy/fish must receive "approval", which equates to a form of pre-opening licensing. At present Harrow have two such premises, supplying the Gaucho restaurant chain with meat products, and the other supplying milk powder nationally to retailers.

A further premise, packing unprocessed fish, has recently enquired about obtaining approval.

Due to the strict requirements of approval, these are currently carried out by the Team Leader and a designated Environmental Health Officer, both holding a Lead Auditor qualification. No other specialist assistance is currently required

## **Advice to Business**

The Service is committed to an educational and advisory role with local business and is a Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and Highfield Accredited registered centre for teaching the Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4 Certificate in Food Hygiene and Health & Safety. As a further service to local businesses it is also registered to teach the Food Hygiene and Health & Safety Update Course.



The Commercial Safety Service now offers Harrow Council branded accredited training courses, bearing the Harrow Council logo on the training material and certificates.

Other related and important areas are:

- The provision/production of advisory leaflets on relevant Food Safety, Standards and Health & Safety matters.
- On site advice and coaching on the Food Standards Agency Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) pack which is aimed to aid food businesses in complying with the requirement to have a food safety management system.
- Working with other Council sections to deliver accredited training courses as part of other training given to members of the community.
- The Commercial Safety Team hold a large number of food and health and safety information leaflets, many of which are available in ethnic minority languages. These are provided to local businesses and the public. Some of this guidance is written and produced in-house, examples of which are:
  - Design of high-risk food premises
  - Provision of sanitary accommodation in Catering Establishments
  - Safer Food for small businesses.
  - Guidance for catering at events.
  - Guidance for Home Caterers
  - Health and Safety requirements for business
- The Commercial Safety Team will be aiming to expand advice given in 2011/2012 through the production of an information newsletter for businesses. The Team will also be exploring the better provision of advice to residents covering home catering as well as general food hygiene.
- With the economic situation affecting businesses, the Commercial Safety Team will also be aiming to work closely with industry bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce, to provide advice to assist businesses.
- Due to the fundamental changes to the national public health agenda, with the formation of Public Health (England) and bringing public health into Local Authorities, the Commercial Safety Team will be at the forefront of delivering public health advice.

The provision of such advice and guidance has an impact on the Teams resources, and it is emphasised that statutory requirements will be the service priority. While the Team will always endeavour to provide advice and guidance, it is an enforcement body and not a consultancy agent.

### **Food and Feeding Stuffs Inspection and Sampling**

The Council's policy is to sample food and animal feeding stuffs to determine compliance with compositional and labelling requirements. Sampling is both proactive and reactive. Proactive active work involves surveillance sampling in accordance with annually reviewed sampling plans. Reactive work includes sampling by Officers during

inspections, as a result of possible involvement with cases of apparent disease and in response to complaints to the service.

The service works to a predetermined sampling plan for the purchase and analysis of a wide range of foods and feeding stuffs. The approach to bacteriological sampling more distinctly falls into two categories, that of reactive and proactive sampling. Reactive sampling takes place during the investigation of gastro-intestinal illness and as an adjunct to hygiene inspections. Proactive sampling usually takes place as part of local, regional or national surveillance initiatives. Officers adhere to the sampling plans and protocols which detail procedures for sampling, indicating how, when and what to sample. Regular meetings are held to discuss, monitor and review sampling initiatives. In 2010/11, **71** chemical samples and **40** microbiological samples were sent for analysis and examination respectively.

The Council's appointed Public Analyst is Eurofins Scientific Limited based at Acton, London. They are also the Council's appointed Agricultural Analyst for feed samples. The bacteriological examination of food and clinical samples is carried out by the Health Protection Agency (or equivalent under the future changes).

In relation to feeding stuffs, there are two farms within the Borough, Harrow School Farm and Pinner Park Farm. Harrow Public School owns the former and it is home to a small herd of longhorn cattle used solely for conservation grazing. The cattle graze on pasture throughout the year. This is supplemented by silage, produced from grass harvested on the farm during the spring.

A herd of beef cattle and sheep are kept at Pinner Park Farm. The cattle are fed wholly from the farm either through grazing the grass pasture or on hay and silage produced at the farm. This intake is supplemented by the provision of commercial mineral blocks. Neither farm is involved in the on-site mixing of animal feed. There are no manufacturers or on-farm mixers of animal feedstuffs within the Borough. As a consequence there are at present no enforcement issues for the council under The Feeding Stuff (Establishments & Intermediaries) Regulations 1999.

For 2011/12 it is intended, as a minimum to maintain the level of chemical sampling at a level comparable to the previous year. Further, and subject to resources, it is intended to increase the level of bacteriological sampling.

### **Control and Investigation of Outbreaks in Food Related Infectious Disease**

All appropriate notified cases and suspected cases of food borne and non-food borne infectious disease are investigated. The objectives are to determine the source of infection and prevent its spread. All notifications of cases are acted upon in accordance with the Service Quality Manual.

The Consultant in Communicable Disease Control Guidance, issued by the Health Protection Unit, provides guidance relating to the investigation of food poisoning and food borne illness, including exclusion from work.

Officers liaise with the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control, General Practitioners and the Health Protection Agency regarding notifications and subsequent investigations, as appropriate.

***Types of Specified Infectious Disease Food Poisoning and Suspected Food Poisoning Cases in Harrow Reported During 2010/2011***

<b>Food Poisoning</b>	160 (36%↓)
<b>Meningococcal Septicaemia</b>	1 (87.5%↓)
<b>Typhoid Fever</b>	17 (47%↑)
<b>Tuberculosis</b>	47 (44%↓)
<b>Acute Meningitis</b>	0 (100%↓)
<b>Paratyphoid Fever</b>	3 (300%↑)
<b>Malaria</b>	1 (94%↓)
<b>Leptospirosis</b>	0 (-)
<b>Viral Hepatitis</b>	9 (-)
<b>Dysentery</b>	7 (43%↑)
<b>Scarlet Fever</b>	1 (95%↓)
<b>Measles</b>	3 (73%↓)
<b>Mumps</b>	21 (68%↓)
<b>Rubella</b>	0 (↓)
<b>Cholera</b>	0 (↓)

Notifications appear to have fallen on the whole but this is due to the change in the reporting system in October 2010. Laboratories should now pass results straight to the Health Protection Unit, though some are going through the Local Authority (as above). The ones to be investigated are then passed on to the HPU and then to us.

Typhoids have increased dramatically, which leads to all household contacts needing to be contacted and samples taken.

Appendix 10 gives a brief overview of the work of the team in a norovirus outbreak, and the speed of response necessary.

### **Control and Investigation of Legionella**

As part of the Teams remit, cases of Legionella within the Borough are investigated by Commercial Safety Officers. National guidance and local policies are followed, and investigations are conducted in conjunction with the Health Protection Agency (or equivalent under the future changes)

### **Feed and Food Safety Incidents**

The Commercial Safety Service responds to food alerts in accordance with the Food Quality Manual and statutory requirements. Food alerts were previously termed food hazard warnings; the new name and new procedure were introduced by the Food Standards Agency in late 2004 to correspond with publication of the revised Food Law Code of Practice. All officers of the Food Team receive food alerts by email direct from the Food Standards Agency.

On receipt, food alerts are assessed by the Team Leader (Commercial) or the Commercial Services Manager and an appropriate response made. A procedure for the assessment of these alerts is contained in the Service Quality Manual.

The Commercial Safety Team co-ordinates the response to food alerts with additional resources being obtained from the wider service, if necessary. The level of work depends upon the nature of the alert and the extent of the investigation subsequently required.

During working hours, the Infectious Disease Clerk is the main point of contact for cases of communicable disease and any serious matter passed to the Senior Officer without delay. Outside of working hours, the Director of Public Health and the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control also have details of the contact arrangements for the duty officers.

The Food Standards Agency are able to raise out of hours issues, such as food incidents, through the Civic Centre Security (general number), who have the contact details of all relevant officers. This is a 24 hour service.

A file of all food alerts and the responses made is maintained. In the calendar year 2010, a total of **28** food alerts were received. This is a **38%** decrease in warnings against the previous year.

### **Liaison with other Organisations**

The Council's commercial safety activities involve liaison with the Food Standards Agency, Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Department of Health (DoH), Local Government Regulators (LGR), Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and other appropriate bodies to achieve food safety objectives and consistency in enforcement. This liaison will normally be through the Team Leader (Food Safety).

Other liaison includes:

- North West London Sector Food Liaison Group. The Group, which meets six times per year, comprises representatives of the nine northwest London Boroughs. The remit of the Group is to provide advice on such matters as enforcement, professional standards and sampling initiatives with the objectives of maximising resources and promoting consistency. Harrow hosts the meetings.
- North West Quadrant Group. The Group comprises representatives of the northwest London Boroughs. The remit of the Group is to provide advice on such matters as enforcement, professional standards and sampling initiatives with the objectives of maximising resources and promoting consistency. A HSE representative also attends.
- London H&S Liaison Group. The Group is representatives from the London Authorities, and cover health and safety issues affecting London. A HSE representative also attends.
- Public Analyst (Harrows Designated Accredited Person for Food Testing)
- Brent and Harrow Trading Standards Service
- Three Valleys Water Company. Harrow is represented at the bi-annual Liaison Meeting with the water authority and the health authority.
- Police
- Working Groups on the Pinner Show and other events with an element of food.
- Health Protection Agency
- Primary Care Trust (especially in terms of Health Promotion)

- Ofsted in terms of nurseries and schools regarding food and safety
- HM Customs and Revenue and the Border Agency
- The London Wide Scores on the Doors Group

Internally, liaison arrangements include:

- Planning: in respect of planning applications involving food premises
- Licensing: the Commercial Safety Team form part of a Responsible Authority under the Licensing Act 2003
- Legal: the production of policies / procedures as well as taking court cases
- Building Control: regarding food premises
- Public Realm: collection of waste from commercial premises
- Housing & Adults: implementation of the Public Health White Paper

### **The Promotion of Commercial Safety and Standards**

The Commercial Safety Service is committed to promotional activities as a vital part of the enforcement mix needed to develop high standards within premises. Recent efforts have been made to improve the balance of promotional activity so that it targets business and the consumer in equal measure.

For the forthcoming year a key theme will be the implementation of the Public Health White Paper (Healthy Lives, Healthy People). This has already seen closer working between the Commercial Safety Team and the Health professionals involved in the medical aspects of public health.

In terms of health and nutrition, the service will be aiming to improve partnership links and provide targeted information to businesses and residents. This has already included the provision of a guide to compliance to all child minders throughout the Borough.

In terms of health, safety and welfare, work will continue on compliance with the national priorities as determined by the HSE, including slips & trips, dermatitis, and falls from heights.

## Annual Performance 2010/2011 at a glance

<b>The percentage of all commercial premises due to be inspected for food hygiene that were inspected in accordance with Food Safety Act Codes of Practice.</b>	<b>A category 100% B category 100% Low Risk categories 78% (C and below risk category)</b>
<b>The percentage of all commercial premises due to be inspected for food standards that were inspected in accordance with Food Safety Act Codes of Practice.</b>	<b>A category 100% B category 100% Low Risk categories 62% (C risk category)</b>
<b>The percentage of all commercial premises due to be inspected for health &amp; safety that were inspected in accordance with HSE Section 18 guidance</b>	<b>A category 100% B1 and B2 category 95% Low Risk categories N/A (C risk category)</b>
<b>The total number of primary inspections carried out. This figure includes new businesses opened during the year.</b>	<b>652 food hygiene 236 food standards 217 health &amp; safety</b>
<b>Number of other secondary inspections and other visits to commercial premises, including sampling visits.</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>Percentage of complaints responded to within 5 working days of receipt.</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Number of food samples submitted for chemical analysis.</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Number of samples submitted for microbiological analysis.</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Number of food hygiene training courses held.</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>The number of individuals successful in completing food hygiene training courses.</b>	<b>252</b>
<b>The percentage of notifications of confirmed or suspected cases of food poisoning or other infectious disease investigated in accordance with quality procedures.</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>The number of accidents investigated by the Commercial Safety Team</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Number of Food Alerts issued by the Food Standards Agency</b>	<b>28</b>

NB: Approximately 15% of the total primary inspections were inspections outstanding from 2009/10

## Imported Foods

The authority does not have major facilities within the Borough that deal with imported food of animal origin. However programmed food standards inspections are carried out at all food premises on a risk assessed basis and individual officers carry out random checks on foods during other visits to food businesses. Additionally, sampling in accordance with the sampling plan and as part of coordinated initiatives, address concerns over the chemical and bacteriological safety of imported food. These priorities are determined in light of advice from the Food Standards Agency, the Public Analyst and Health Protection Agency.

Work on imported food also arises through home authority referrals and direct from the importers. Advice is provided in support of smaller local food importers; as such businesses are usually unable to call on detailed technical advice from the specialist consultancies.

This year it is proposed to carry out proactive surveillance, to check on the legality of products of animal origin sold within the Borough, especially where such products originate outside the EU. All Officers within the Team have undergone FSA Imported Food Training to enable them to identify issues and take appropriate action.

## 4. RESOURCES

“Providing Environmental Health and Trading Standards Services (is) equivalent to just under 1% of Local Authority Expenditure”

Local Better Regulation Office Report, 2008

### Financial Allocation

Each of the enforcement Sections within Environmental Health Services is separately accounted as an individual business unit. However, some budgets shown are a proportion of the larger management and administration budgets. The principal budgets for the Commercial Safety Team are:

<i>Budgetary Cost Centre</i>	<i>Actual Expenditure 2010/2011</i>	<i>Estimated Expenditure 2011/2012</i>
<b>Staffing cost**</b>	491,390	495,813
<b>Car Allowances and mileage</b>	15,700	16,014
<b>All Other Revenue Costs</b>	10,640	10,854
*		
<b>Sampling &amp; analysis</b>	9,760	9,955
<b>All Other SSC Costs</b>	145,029	163,160
<b>Total</b>	624,861	646,944
<i>Budgetary Cost Centre</i>	<i>Actual Income 2009/2010</i>	<i>Estimated Income 2010/2011</i>
<b>Income</b>	20,760	23,760

\* Travel, subsistence, equipment, legal advice and IT costs are separately accounted for.

\*\* Particular difficulties were experienced through the last year in maintaining levels of qualified staff but external recruitment was successful in attracting a qualified officer to permanent posts. One EHO has been on secondment since 2007 preventing permanent recruitment for this post. The secondment will not be extended for another year. To cover this, a full time post is currently being recruited to, with an interim cover on a 2 day a week basis by a contractor.

There have been no costs or time attributed to the service in terms of senior management structures and support functions such as administrative support, which is provided by the centralised support team.

Standard Service Charges (charges made by other internal departments) for the service have increased by 11% over the course of the year, leading to a 3.5% bottom line increase to the Team's budget..



## Staffing Allocation

**“The Enforcing Authority must have sufficient managerial, political, legal and administrative capacity to comply with the Section 18 Standard. Such capacity includes the ability to...put in place and maintain levels of resourcing compliant with the requirement to make adequate arrangements for enforcement, ensure the intervention plan is delivered”**

**Health & Safety Executive, Section 18 Legal Standard**

**“The Authority shall appoint a sufficient number of authorised officers to carry out the work set out in the service delivery plan”**

**Food Standards Agency, Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement**

The full time equivalent staffing in the Section is as follows:

<i>Number of full time equivalent officers</i>	<i>Job Title</i>	<i>Food Safety Codes of Practice and Section 18 Authorisations/Competencies</i>
<b>0.4</b>	Commercial Services Manager	Full and includes authorisation of proceedings
<b>1</b>	Team Leader	Full
<b>2</b>	Officers	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>4</b>	Environmental Health Officers	Full (includes one EHO working 25hrs and one EHO doing 2 days)
<b>1</b>	Environmental Health Officers	<b>Secondment (covered by fully authorised P/T consultant)</b>
<b>1</b>	Technical Officer	Qualified to do low risk food hygiene inspections, but not food standards. Enforcement and formal action limited due to level of qualification
<b>1</b>	Technical Officer	Qualified to do health & safety, but not food enforcement. Enforcement and formal action limited due to level of qualification

All current Environmental Health Officers within the food service are assessed as competent in accordance with the Food Safety Code of Practice. Two posts are currently vacant and one due to secondment and being covered on a 40% basis by a contractor. The contractor costs are met from within existing budgets. Two EHOs have just gone part time. This represents a cut in Officers of 28% cut in the Commercial Safety Team within the last 3 years.

There have been no costs or time attributed to the service in terms of senior management structures and support functions. An Infectious Disease Clerk function sits within the section.

Administrative support is offered in part through the Councils “One Stop Shop” and “Access Harrow” sections that take calls / meet the public and generate worksheets that are allocated to the Teams. The technical administrative function for the Section has been put on to Officers, leading to more officer time carrying out administrative functions and having a knock on effect to their targets being met.

## Estimated Breakdown of Hours per Service Delivered

The full complement of the Commercial Safety Team is **10 FTE Officers** (including the Team Leader). The current vacant officer posts are only being covered on a 40% basis (2 days a week), and one EHO has been seconded to another department for the last 3 years. One EHO has moved to flexible working (25 hours/week), and one EHO has gone flexible retirement to 3 days a week of which one day is seconded to UNISON. Therefore the complement of the team will be **8 FTE Officers** until recruitment to the vacant posts.

A breakdown of time and tasks for 2011/2012 (Appendix 6) shows that **6.3 FTE Officers** are required to carry out the statutory inspection programme, being:

Total FTE Officers required to deliver Food Hygiene Inspections:	<b>4.3</b>
Total FTE Officers required to deliver Food Standard Inspections:	<b>1.1</b>
Total FTE Officers required to deliver Health & Safety Inspections:	<b><u>0.9</u></b>
	<b>6.3 FTE</b>

This leaves an estimate of **1.7 FTE Officers** to do all other work outside the inspection programme. This includes the investigation of food poisonings / infectious diseases, investigation of food complaints/food hygiene complaints, delivery of the sampling plan or other reactive aspects of the service or contributions to the Councils activities such as the Public Health Agenda. Additionally 1 FTE accounted for in the above is the Team Leader who has management responsibilities not accounted for in the tasks.

*The staffing capacity set out above does not achieve the expectation in the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement or HSE Section 18 Requirements. Based on this, the small officer team must prioritise workload to ensure high risk premises are targeted, and resources allocated appropriately in all other areas as noted elsewhere in this document.*

## **Staff Development Plan**

**“The Authority shall ensure that all authorised officers and appropriate support staff receive the training needed to be competent to deliver the technical and administrative aspects of the work in which they will be involved, in accordance with the Code of Practice”**

**Food Standards Agency, Framework Agreement on  
Local Authority Food Law Enforcement**

**“The Enforcing Authority shall have systems for appointing and authorising suitably qualified inspectors under Section 19 HSWA....and...arrangements to attain and maintain competence”**

**Health & Safety Executive, Section 18 Legal Standard**

The scheme or Individual Personal Development Plan (IPAD) seeks to identify personal development issues for staff and business needs by agreement, formulate an action plan to build upon strengths and address areas for improvement. All commercial safety staff are included in this scheme.

The commercial safety team has a competency framework established for the appointment of staff and monitoring of existing staff. All food officers must undertake at least 10 hours continuing professional development (CPD) in line with the Food Law Code of Practice. Additionally, all qualified EHOs must undertake at least 20 hours CPD as required under their Chartered Institute membership (qualification requirement under the Food Law Code of Practice)

Officers carrying out food hygiene, standards and health & safety will also be subject to a monitoring procedure to ensure competence and consistency, where further training may be identified and actioned.

## 5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

### Quality Assessment

In June 2008, The Food Standards Agency issued a consolidated Code of Practice and associated guidance under the Food Safety Act 1990 and new Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 relating to such matters as inspection programming, conduct of inspections and the qualifications of inspecting officers. Supplementary guidance is issued by LGR (Local Government Regulators).

The object of the Code of Practice and guidance is to provide advice on the interpretation, implementation and operational aspects of food law enforcement and to help ensure consistency of enforcement on a national basis. In addition, there are industry guides to good hygiene practice that provide advice on compliance with hygiene regulations. Officers are fully aware that all inspections must be carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice and related guidance and the information is readily available to all enforcement staff.

In 2010, the HSE issued Section 18 requirements that must be met in ensuring the enforcement of health and safety legislative requirements, with emphasis on what the Enforcing Authority (in this case, the London Borough of Harrow) must have in place.

In line with these standards, all commercial safety officers undertake monitoring to ensure consistency of approach as well as assessment to ensure compliance to policies and procedures. The Team Leader co-ordinates and participates to ensure consistency and fairness. These visits are recorded on the internal quality monitoring forms.

While National Indicators have been removed on the whole, the service continues to measure what was NI 182 and NI 184.

In line with the National Indicator 182, the Community Safety Service participates in sending satisfaction surveys to customers to evaluate satisfaction with the service. The Food Safety Team is an active part of this.

The FSA introduced National Indicator (NI 184) measuring the percentage of premises within the Borough which are 'Broadly Compliant'. "Broadly Compliant" equates to a food premises scoring no more than 10 points when risk rated in respect of hygiene, structure and confidence in management, as detailed in the FSA Code of Practice. A national target of 75% of food premises being broadly compliant has been set, and Officers within the Borough actively work towards this. Current figures for the Borough are as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> April 2010  
**78.06%**

1<sup>st</sup> April 2011  
**78.15%**

These results show good consistency taking into account the turnover of premises, and the maintenance of standards in the majority of premises.

## **External Audits**

The last Food Standards Audit of Harrow's Food Safety Service took place in 2004 and the audit process is currently being reviewed, with a move towards peer auditing and leading to an increased frequency of audits.

The last HSE audit of Harrow's Health & Safety Service took place nearly 10 years ago. Under the new Section 18 Guidance, peer reviews are to take place and Harrow in conjunction with Brent and Barnet are to carry out peer reviews of the health and safety service within the 2011/12 financial year.

Harrow is subject to peer review in terms of the Scores on the Doors Scheme, and underwent monitoring in July 2010. The results showed consistency amongst officers.

Community Safety Services is also investigating the possibility of participating in a peer review scheme currently being devised between IdeA, Westminster Council, Coventry Council and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR)

## 6. REVIEW

### Review against the Service Plan

The Service Plan is reviewed annually. The Department's main service plan is reported to Members of the Council, under non-executive arrangements as soon as practicable at the start of the financial year. This draws together the work carried out in the previous year, the achievement of targets and areas for development for the service as a whole. It further establishes the service wide areas of work for the coming year.

Due to the issuing of the Section 18 guidance in September 2010, this is the first year Health & Safety functions have been reported as part of an official plan that requires approval. Both Health & Safety and Food Safety functions will therefore be covered within the Commercial Safety Service Plan, and this plan will be subject to review.

A review of 2010/11 performance delivery objectives is set out in **Appendix 2**.

### Identification of any variation from the Commercial Safety Service Plan

The review process considers variations from the service plan and performance delivery objective and, where appropriate, the reasons for the variance. A quarterly review of how the Service Plan targets are being met is to be conducted by the Team Leader and reported to the Service Manager. This is to identify early on any major deviance or potential failure to meet targets, and put appropriate actions in place.

### Areas of Improvement

As part of the planning process the Service will identify targets and areas for improvements in the forthcoming year. The action plan for work to be undertaken in 2011/12 is given in **Appendix 1**. These relate to the specific improvement targets for the commercial safety service.

The plan sets out how the Service targets fit within National and Local outcomes.

The Food Safety Service's main service plan draws together the achievement of targets and areas for development for the service as a whole and establishes an improvement programme for the service for the coming year.

## **Review of the Database**

The actions of the Commercial Safety Team are recorded on a computer database, M3 provided by Northgate. Inspections are allocated, assessed and risk rated on this system. It is therefore imperative that the data is as accurate as feasibly possible.

Therefore the database will be reviewed quarterly to ensure that all food premises are correctly recorded and have food hygiene, food standards, health & safety and any other relevant components recorded against them. Policies are in place to ensure this.

Through the use of online publications, Officer visits and other sources of information, the database will be checked to ensure its accuracy in recording all commercial premises in the Borough.

**APPENDIX 1: FOOD SERVICE DELIVERY / DEVELOPMENT  
OBJECTIVES 2012 - 2012**



## APPENDIX 1

### FOOD SERVICE DELIVERY/DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES 2011/2012

REF. NO.	SERVICE DELIVERY/ DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS	LINK TO CORPORATE TARGETS	WELL BEING OUTCOMES*	PRIORITY REGULATORY OUTCOMES**
47 CS 1	To inspect all food premises, vehicles, stalls and other related premises under the provisions of Food Safety Law, related Regulations, new EU legislation and any other relevant legislation, to ensure satisfactory standards of hygiene and food safety are being maintained.	Team Leader Commercial Safety Team	Achieve 100% inspection rate for Category A & B premises.  Achieve a minimum of 70% inspection rate for Category C, D and E premises.	Update training provided to staff joining the Commercial Safety Team as necessary.	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most / supporting the town centre, local shopping centres and businesses: improved, sustainable premises. Improved economy and job sector  Keeping Neighbourhoods clean, green and safe: improved street environment through duty of care enforcement	<b>Economic Wellbeing / Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	Help people to live healthier lives by preventing ill health and harm and promoting public health  Ensure a safe, healthy and sustainable food chain for the benefits of consumers and the rural economy
CS 2	To inspect all commercial premises, vehicles, stalls and other related premises under the provisions of Health & Safety Law, related Regulations, EU legislation and any other relevant legislation, to ensure satisfactory standards of health, safety and welfare are being maintained.	Team Leader Commercial Safety Team	Achieve 100% inspection rate for Category A & B1, and B2 premises.  Achieve a minimum of 30% intervention rate for Category C premises.	Update training provided to staff joining the Commercial Safety Team as necessary.	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most / supporting the town centre, local shopping centres and businesses: improved, sustainable premises. Improved economy and job sector  Keeping Neighbourhoods clean, green and safe: improved street environment through duty of care enforcement	<b>Economic Wellbeing / Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	Help people to live healthier lives by preventing ill health and harm and promoting public health

CS 3	To meet in full the food sampling programme.	Team Leader Commercial Safety Team	Sampling programme implemented in compliance with the Code of Practice.	In post qualification training and guidance to officers, as necessary.	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most / supporting the town centre, local shopping centres and businesses: improved confidence in food safety, as well as greater information for consumers	<b>Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	<p>Help people to live healthier lives by preventing ill health and harm and promoting public health</p> <p>Ensure a safe, healthy and sustainable food chain for the benefits of consumers and the rural economy</p>
CS 4	To respond to all complaints regarding food, health & safety and commercial premises within 5 working days of receipt.	Team Leader Commercial Safety Team	Response within time scale.	In post qualification training and guidance to officers, as necessary.	<p>United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most / supporting the town centre, local shopping centres and businesses: improved confidence in the food sector, working closely to meet communities needs</p> <p>Keeping Neighbourhoods clean, green and safe: improved street environment through rubbish investigations</p>	<b>Economic Wellbeing / Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	<p>Help people to live healthier lives by preventing ill health and harm and promoting public health</p> <p>Ensure a safe, healthy and sustainable food chain for the benefits of consumers and the rural economy</p>
CS 5	To instigate a series of projects aimed at topical areas within the commercial sector to improve compliance	Team Leader Commercial Safety Team	Completion of projects	As required	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most / supporting the town centre, local shopping centres and businesses: improved confidence in food safety, as well as greater information for consumers	<b>Economic Wellbeing / Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	Support enterprise and economic growth by ensuring a fair, responsible and competitive trading environment

CS 6	To continue to work with The Association of London Environmental health Managers, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the FSA to provide an internet-based public assess point to view "Rating Scores" for food premises.	Service Manager Team Leader	Continued publication of inspection ratings on the "yourlondon.com" website, or future website that may replace this as part of any national scheme.	Continuous staff updates to ensure risk ratings carried out to enable the scores on the doors.	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most / supporting the town centre, local shopping centres and businesses:: Improving confidence in Harrows food sector, as well as providing communities with better information	<b>Exercise of choice and control / Economic Well-Being</b>	<p>Help people to live healthier lives by preventing ill health and harm and promoting public health</p> <p>Ensure a safe, healthy and sustainable food chain for the benefits of consumers and the rural economy</p> <p>Support enterprise and economic growth by ensuring a fair, responsible and competitive trading environment</p>
49 S 7	To deliver a minimum 12 accredited Level 2 training sessions	Team Leader All training staff	Completion of target within the financial year	Ensure all staff involved delivering training are appropriately trained.	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most / supporting the town centre, local shopping centres and businesses:: Improving training opportunities for businesses and residents, to lead to better standards and resulting benefits.	<b>Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life / Making a Positive Contribution / Economic Well-Being / Personal Dignity</b>	<p>Ensure a safe, healthy and sustainable food chain for the benefits of consumers and the rural economy</p> <p>Support enterprise and economic growth by ensuring a fair, responsible and competitive trading environment</p>

\* **Well Being Outcomes:** These are the key outcomes as detailed in the White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say'.

\*\* **A New Approach to Refreshing the National Enforcement Priorities for Local Authority Regulatory Services, Local Better Regulation Office**

**APPENDIX 2: INFECTIOUS DISEASES SERVICE DELIVERY  
2011 - 2012**



## Appendix 2

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES SERVICE DELIVERY/DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES FOR 2011/2012




REF. NO.	SERVICE DELIVERY/ DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS (TN)	OUTCOME	WELL BEING OUTCOMES*
ID 1	All notifications of confirmed or suspected cases to be acted upon in accordance with quality manual procedures and guidance relating to investigation and exclusion from work etc.	ID Clerk Service Manager Team Leader Food Team	Urgent notifications to responded to within 1 working day. Respond to non-urgent notification within 3 days.	Ongoing as business needs are identified.	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most : Improving the health of the community and ensuring minimal impact on the local economy through sickness	<b>Economic Wellbeing / Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>
ID2 52	Implementation of new Public Health Regulations, that updates the investigation of Infectious Diseases and clarifies the role of Local Authorities and Health Protection Unit	ID Clerk Service Manager Team Leader Food Team	Implementation of new Public Health Notices and updating of memorandum of understanding	Training session between HPU and Food Safety Team	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most : Improving the health of the community and ensuring minimal impact on the local economy through sickness	<b>Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>

\* **Well Being Outcomes:** These are the key outcomes as detailed in the White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say'.





**APPENDIX 3: REVIEW OF THE DELIVERY OF FOOD  
SERVICE OBJECTIVES 2010 - 2011**

## APPENDIX 3


### REVIEW OF THE DELIVERY OF FOOD SERVICE OBJECTIVES 2010/2011

REF. NO.	SERVICE DELIVERY/ DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS	LINK TO CORPORATE / NATIONAL TARGETS	WELL BEING OUTCOMES*	2009/10 OUTCOME
FS 1	To inspect all food premises, vehicles, stalls and other related premises under the provisions of Food Safety Law, related Regulations, new EU legislation and any other relevant legislation, to ensure satisfactory standards of hygiene and food safety are being maintained.	Achieve 100% inspection rate for Category A & B premises.  Achieve a minimum of 70% inspection rate for Category C, D and E premises.	Update training provided to staff joining the Food Team as necessary.  Completion of practical professional training to enable the Food Safety Officer to be qualified to participate in this objective	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most: improved, sustainable premises. Improved economy and job sector  Keeping Neighbourhoods clean, green and safe: improved street environment through duty of care enforcement	<b>Economic Wellbeing / Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	 100% A & B premises inspected   78% Low Risk Premises Inspected
FS 2	To meet in full the food sampling programme.	Sampling programme implemented in compliance with the Code of Practice.	In post qualification training and guidance to officers, as necessary.	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most: improved confidence in food safety, as well as greater information for consumers	<b>Economic Wellbeing / Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	 Sampling done within budget
FS 3	To respond to all complaints regarding food and food premises within 5 working days of receipt.	Response within time scale.	In post qualification training and guidance to officers, as necessary.	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most: improved confidence in the food sector, working closely to meet communities needs  Keeping Neighbourhoods clean, green and safe: improved street environment through rubbish investigations	<b>Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	



REF. NO.	SERVICE DELIVERY/ DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS	LINK TO CORPORATE / NATIONAL TARGETS	WELL BEING OUTCOMES*	2009/10 OUTCOME
FS 4	To instigate a series of projects aimed at topical areas within the food sector to improve compliance	Completion of projects	As required	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most: improved confidence in food safety, as well as greater information for consumers	<b>Economic Wellbeing / Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	 Alternative Enforcement policy and procedure in place and working  Quality Manual updated to reflect above
FS 5	To lead or contribute to a Waste Disposal enforcement for commercial premises during the Councils Weeks of Action, incorporating duty of care and related issues.	Attendance during the Weeks of Action, including visits to all related commercial premises to ensure correct refuse collection and storage (to be carried out in conjunction with enviro-crime team)	To be assessed and addressed as necessary	Better Streets: Improving the street scene / environment by better compliance by food premises with the storage and collection of waste	<b>Economic Wellbeing / Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	 Contributed to all weeks of action
6	To continue to work with The Association of London Environmental health Managers, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the FSA to provide an internet-based public assess point to view "Rating Scores" for food premises.	Continued publication of inspection ratings on the "yourlondon.com" website, or future website that may replace this as part of any national scheme.	Continuous staff updates to ensure risk ratings carried out to enable the scores on the doors.	Stronger Communities: Improving confidence in Harrows food sector, as well as providing communities with better information	<b>Exercise of choice and control / Economic Well-Being</b>	 National scheme still in draft. Harrow has contributed to the process, and continues to operate the London Wide Scheme
FS 7	To deliver a minimum 12 accredited Level 2 food training sessions	Completion of target within the financial year	Ensure all staff involved delivering training are appropriately trained.	Stronger Communities: Improving training opportunities for businesses and residents, to lead to better standards and resulting benefits.	<b>Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life / Making a Positive Contribution / Economic Well-Being / Personal Dignity</b>	 Delivered X accredited courses, teaching X candidates

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES SERVICE DELIVERY/DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES FOR 2010/2011

REF. NO.	SERVICE DELIVERY/ DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS (TN)	OUTCOME	WELL BEING OUTCOMES*	2009/10 OUTCOME
ID 1	All notifications of confirmed or suspected cases to be acted upon in accordance with quality manual procedures and guidance relating to investigation and exclusion from work etc.	Urgent notifications to responded to within 1 working day. Respond to non-urgent notification within 3 days.	Ongoing as business needs are identified.	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most : Improving the health of the community and ensuring minimal impact on the local economy through sickness	<b>Economic Wellbeing / Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	 100% response time
ID2	Implementation of new Public Health Regulations, that updates the investigation of Infectious Diseases and clarifies the role of Local Authorities and Health Protection Unit	Implementation of new Public Health Notices and updating of memorandum of understanding	Training session between HPU and Food Safety Team	United and Involved Communities / Supporting and Protecting People that need it most : Improving the health of the community and ensuring minimal impact on the local economy through sickness	<b>Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>	<b>Improved Health / Improved Quality of Life</b>

\* **Well Being Outcomes:** These are the key outcomes as detailed in the White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say'.



**APPENDIX 4: COMMENTS ON VARIANCES 2010 - 2011**

## APPENDIX 4: Comments on Variances 2010/11

The year saw considerable pressure on the resources of the commercial enforcement service through the combined effects of the high demand for services and the national shortage of qualified staff that possess the statutory competencies for food inspection work. Particular or unusual demand pressures were:

- The Team Leader (Health & Safety) left the council in January 2011 through the voluntary severance scheme, at the same time as a full time Health & Safety EHO took flexible retirement to two days a week
  - Recruitment to the a new team structure is taking place to address this
- One full time officer was not available for large parts of the year due to ongoing medical issues.
  - These issues are being addressed, and hopefully resolved this year
- An EHO within the Food Section went part time (25 hours a week) in line with the Councils flexible “work life balance” programme
  - The new team structure is being put in place which will allow this officer the potential of going full time when child care allows it, in line with being an employer of choice
- A high number of prosecution cases being taken as a result of standards slipping within the commercial business sector.
  - New systems to allow the speedy progression of cases is being looked at to reduce officer time in such matters.
- The Food Standards Agency drive towards outcomes rather than outputs during inspections and follow ups has led to a concerted effort by the Food Safety Officers to drive an improved cultural and safety change. Enforcement increased, with Improvement Notices Served in 2010/11 seeing an increase of approximately **20%** compared to 2009/10
  - The team has put in place a system to allow Notices to be served on site, to reduce officer time, which is not being trialled across the North West Sector of London.
- The HSE drive towards outcomes rather than outputs during inspections and follow ups has led to a concerted effort by the Health & Safety Officers to drive an improved cultural and safety change. Enforcement increased, with Improvement Notices Served in 2010/11 seeing an increase of approximately **20%** compared to 2009/10
  - As above
- Increased resistance to compliance by Businesses, especially food businesses, mainly due to financial implications of carrying out necessary legal works. This is likely to increase due to an increasingly harsh economic climate. This was and will be further seen as premises change hands more regularly due to running costs, a lack of registrations being submitted and therefore more new premises being found by the Commercial Safety Service while out on district. Such premises are then subject to reactive changes, at greater cost than if they had been put in place prior to opening.

- Increased build up of food premises in specific areas, leading to increased competition and a markedly increase in “corner cutting” especially in statutory required areas (e.g. toilet facilities, food hygiene training, food safety management systems etc). This requires a greater emphasis on enforcement, which is time consuming for the team.
  - Steps are being taken to work with Planning to prevent non-sustainable food premises from being allowed.
- Of the two Technical Officers, only one met the Code of Practice competency requirements for food hygiene and for only low risk (C-E) premises. This Officer is not Food Standards qualified so unable to take any food standards enforcement or inspection. The other Technical Officer is qualified for health & safety only, and not any aspect of food enforcement.
  - As part of the Council IPAD system, training needs are being addressed
- Staff resources were diverted from discretionary or non-statutory activities with lower impacts on overall service delivery, to target high-risk premises and higher risk activities. Additionally, some statutory functions have suffered as a result of having to divert resources to meet Council initiatives.
- The ongoing secondment of an EHO, since 2007, leading to only a 40% cover to stay within budgetary constraints. It has not been possible to recruit short time to this post, especially as the secondment end date is subject to change.
  - It is likely this EHO will leave their post, allowing the recruitment to the position in the Team.
- A dramatic increase in typhoid cases in the Borough, leading to resource intensive investigations. For each Typhoid case, the whole household and immediate contacts need to be investigated and a number of samples taken.
  - Work is ongoing with the Health Protection Agency and PCT to see what proactive steps can be put in place to prevent rather than react to such cases.

## **APPENDIX 5: FOOD SERVICE OVERVIEW AND LEGISLATION**

## **APPENDIX 5: Commercial Safety Service Overview and Legislation**

### **Food Service Overview**

The Food Safety aspect of the commercial safety team conducts the following statutory functions:

- Inspection of food premises for food hygiene and food standards
- Investigation of Infectious Diseases
- Investigation of Food Poisonings and Food Poisoning Outbreaks
- Microbiological and Chemical Sampling of Food
- Provision of food hygiene and safety advice to residents and businesses
- Home (National) Authority for number of premises including Spar UK Ltd
- Inspection and Enforcement of Feeding Stuffs within the Borough
- Movement of Animals (Pigs, Cattle and Sheep)
- Approval of Product Specific Food Premises
- Disposal of animal by products

The Food Safety aspect of the commercial safety team conducts the following non-statutory functions:

- Implementation and Running of the “Scores on the Doors” scheme
- Promotion of health promotion, specifically linked to food and infectious disease
- Running Food Hygiene Training Courses for Residents and Businesses
- Provide training and advice on the FSA “Safer Food Better Business” pack

### **Health and Safety Service Overview**

The Health and Safety aspect of the commercial safety team conducts the following statutory functions:

- Inspection of commercial premises for health and safety
- Investigation of Legionella cases
- Investigation of Accidents, Incidents and Dangerous Occurrences
- Investigation of premise complaints for health, safety and welfare issues
- Provision of health and safety advice to residents and businesses
- Lead (National) Authority for number of premises including Homebase and Wickes

The Health and Safety aspect of the commercial safety team conducts the following non-statutory functions:

- Promotion of health, specifically linked to health, safety and welfare
- Running Health & Safety Training Courses for Residents and Businesses

The above are areas specifically linked to food hygiene and safety. The Service is also involved in Duty of Care (Waste), pest control and pollution (noise and odour) issues arising from food premises.



## Legislation

The Commercial Safety Team enforces National and European Legislation.

The main legislation relevant to food enforcement is The Food Safety Act 1990 as amended, The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006, and the Food Labelling Regulations 1996 as amended.

The main legislation relevant to health & safety enforcement is The Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and the “six pack” of related health & safety regulations

Overall, the Service enforce, inspect under and advice on over **600** food related pieces of legislation and statutory guidance and the equivalent for health & safety. An example is the Food Labelling Regulations 1996 and 11 subsequent major amendments to these since.

**APPENDIX 6: ESTIMATED BREAKDOWN OF HOURS PER SERVICE DEMAND**

## Appendix 6: Estimated Breakdown of Hours per Service Demand

The estimate is based upon an approximate time for completing an inspection, including paperwork and data entry for a given category of premise and travel time. Attempts are made by Officers to group inspections together to reduce travel time.

<b>FOOD HYGIENE INSPECTIONS</b>			
Risk Category	Average Time per Inspection (hrs)	No. of Inspections	Total (hours) (time x No.)
A-C	5	579	2895
D-E	2	304	608
Revisits (estimated: working on 50%)	2.5	441	1323
Misc Inspections (new premises etc)	4	122	488
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>5314</b>
<b>FOOD STANDARDS INSPECTIONS</b>			
A-B	3	67	201
C	2	288	576
Revisits (estimated: working on 25%)	2	89	178
Misc Inspections (new premises etc)	4	126	504
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1459</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>			<b>6773</b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; SAFETY INSPECTIONS</b>			
A-B2	4	64	256
Revisits (estimated: working on 20%)	2	13	26
Misc Inspections (new premises etc)	4	297	1188
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1470</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>			<b>8230</b>

Estimate of the total number of hours a full time equivalent post would have in a 12 month period:-

Total hours (37hours week/52weeks)		1924.00
Less annual leave/flexi	(32 days)	240.00
Less Bank Holidays	(8 days)	59.35
Less Sickness	(1 week)	37.00
	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>1587.64</b>
Food Hazard Warning	(2 days)	15
Enforcement	(10 days)	74
Research / CPD Update	(8 days)	60
Meetings	(5 days)	37
Misc Admin	(10 days)	74
Performance Review	(2 days)	16
Training	(10 days)	74
	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>350</b>
	<b>Total Hours 1 FTE</b>	<b>1237.64</b>

**APPENDIX 7: ENFORCEMENT BREAKDOWN 2010-2011**

## Comparison of Enforcement 2009-2010 and 2010-2011

Enforcement	2009-2010	2010-2011	Increase/Decrease
Warning Letters	245	412	↑41%
Improvement Notices	126	177	↑29%
Simple Cautions	3	3	-
Prosecutions	1	2	↑50%
Closures	8	7	↓12%

## **APPENDIX 8: SCORES ON THE DOORS RATINGS**

# Scores on the Doors

In 2006, a number of pilot schemes were launched nationally regarding the display of hygiene scores at food premises. The London Borough of Harrow was a founding member of the London Wide pilot scheme, centred on a “5 star” scheme. In 2009, the Food Standards Agency started to examine the implication of a national scheme but has yet to agree its format or its support amongst all Local Authorities. While this continues, London continues to implement the 5 star scheme, based on the risk rating given to the premise by the Inspecting Officer as per the Food Law Code of Practice. As a result, food premises are given one of the following ratings:



**Excellent:** Very high standards of food safety management. Fully compliant with food safety legislation.



**Very good:** Good food safety management. High standard of compliance with food safety legislation.



**Good:** Good level of legal compliance. Some more effort might be required.



**Fair:** Fair compliance with food safety legislation. More effort required to meet all legal requirements.



**Poor:** Poor level of compliance with food safety legislation much more effort required.



**Very poor:** A general failure to comply with legal requirements. Little or no appreciation of food safety. Major effort required.

There are exceptions, where premises that are rated low risk (E category – minimal food, alternative assessment) are not included in the scheme and nor are those premises subject to prosecution action.

The full list of scores for the Boroughs food premises can be found at [www.yourlondon.gov.uk](http://www.yourlondon.gov.uk)

As of the start of the 2010 financial, 869 Harrow food premises were on the website, broken down as following:

Star Rating	Number of Premises	Percentage
	32	4%
	137	16%
	293	33%
	198	23%
	176	20%
	33	4%

## **APPENDIX 9: HOME AND LEAD AUTHORITY PREMISES**



## Home Authorities

Bakkavor	Forward Drive, Harrow	National Pizza Producer
Spar	College Road, Harrow	National Retailer
Top-Op Foods	Parr Road, Harrow	International Importer
Anglo-Dal	Harrow	National Producer
HealthAid	Marlborough Hill, Harrow	International Supplier

Other companies are represented on a regional basis.

## Lead Authorities

Wickes	Station Road, Harrow	National DIY Chain
Homebase	Harrow Weald	National DIY Chain

It should be noted that Harrow Council and Homebase (under the umbrella company Home Retail) are looking to joint fund / provide student Environmental Health Officer positions in 2011/12

## **APPENDIX 10: NOROVIRUS CASE STUDY**

## Infectious Disease Outbreak Investigation

A key role of the Team in public health is the investigation of infectious disease, in partnership with the Health Protection Agency and Primary Care Trust Public Health Consultants.

The timeline below shows the work of the Team over a 48 hour period when an outbreak occurred earlier in the year. The cause was a Communion Party, involving over 128 people. To complicate matters, a lot of those involved were teachers and pupils and the schools were breaking up on the Friday.

### INVESTIGATION TIMELINE

Sunday	2pm	Communion Party takes place	WHOLE INVESTIGATION FROM THE TEAM BEING INFORMED TO PROVIDING ALL NECESSARY INFORMATION AND SAMPLES WAS LESS THAN 48 HOURS
Wednesday	2pm	Council contacted by 6 separate families throughout course of the day about illness believed to be from the above party.	
	4pm	Commercial Safety Team Notified	
	5pm	All 6 families contacted and details taken and sample pots dropped off Health Protection Unit given heads up	
	6pm	Organiser of event contacted List of contact details provided for most of those that attended the party	
	7pm	Spreadsheet set up to allow recoding of information gained	
Thursday	All Day	Approximately <b>128 persons</b> contacted (directly or indirectly) Brief history taken from all and food and utensil samples collected Local Caterer identified	
	AM	Local Caterer visited and interviewed	
	AM	Education informed due to people affected	
	PM	Event Location visited – swabs and samples taken	
	2pm	Teleconference with HPU, PCT, Laboratory	
	PM	Questionnaire designed and finalised.	
Friday	All Day	Remaining attendees contacted	
	PM	Further samples collected and sent to lab by Courier	
	AM	Letter sent to all schools re illness and 48 hour rule	
	2pm	Teleconference with HPU, PCT, Laboratory	
	PM	Database with all accurate information sent to HPU	

Due to the actions of the Team, the HPU were able to determine it was a norovirus probably carried by the food. Secondary cases were minimised due to the advice being given by the Team to all those contacted, and the Local Caterer was officially warned due to hygiene issues.

The investigation is currently is to be used by the HPU as an example of “Best Practice” for both investigations and partnership working.

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**REPORT FOR:            Licensing & General  
   Purposes Committee**

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**Date of Meeting:**            12 September 2011

**Subject:**                        **Review of Polling Districts and  
Polling Stations**

**Responsible Officer:**    Hugh Peart – Director of Legal &  
Governance Services

**Exempt:**                         No

**Enclosures:**                 None

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report sets out the proposal for review of Harrow’s polling districts and polling stations in accordance with legislation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Committee is requested to:

1. Agree to establish a Review Working Group to undertake the review of the polling districts and polling stations in Harrow;
2. To agree the appointment of 5 Members (3 Labour, 2 Conservative) to the Review Working Group as follows:  
  
Councillor Keith Ferry (Chairman), Councillors Mano Dharmarajah, Ben Wealthy, Marilyn Ashton and Joyce Nickolay;
3. To agree the appointment of a representative from Harrow Association of Disabled People to the Review Working Group as a non-voting co-opted member;
4. To agree the terms of reference of the Review Working Group set out at appendix 1.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **2.1 Background**

Section 18(C) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, require the London Borough of Harrow to review its polling district and polling places every four years. The Electoral Administration Act 2006 also places a duty on the local authority to review the polling districts and places within its area. Harrow undertook its last review in 2007 and must therefore complete the current review by 31 December 2011 and thereafter every four years.

Harrow is currently divided into 21 wards. Those 21 wards have been divided into 76 polling districts, and polling stations are designated within polling places in each polling district. In Harrow, the entire polling district is designated as the polling place.

### **2.2 Definitions**

A **polling district** is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area, i.e. a UK Parliamentary constituency, a European Parliamentary electoral region, a ward or an electoral division. It is the responsibility of the Borough Council to divide its area into polling districts, and for keeping the polling districts under review.

A **polling place** is a geographical area in which a polling station is located. However, as there is no legal definition of what a polling place is, the geographical area could be defined as tightly as a particular building or as widely as the entire polling district. It is the responsibility of the Borough Council to designate the polling places, and for keeping the polling places under review.

A **polling station** is the actual area where the process of voting takes place, and must be located within the polling place designated for the particular polling district. The Returning Officer for the particular election must provide a sufficient number of polling stations, and allot the electors to those polling stations in such manner as he or she thinks the most convenient.

### **2.3 The Review**

In order to comply with the legislation this review must be undertaken and completed by 31 December 2011. However, the Electoral Register is published on the 1 December, and the proposal is to undertake and complete the review before this date.

The purpose of the review is to ensure that:

- (1) All electors have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and
- (2) So far as is reasonable and practicable that the polling places are accessible to all electors (including disabled persons) having regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

In undertaking the review:

- (1) A notice of the holding of the review must be published;
- (2) The authority must consult the Returning Officer for every parliamentary election held in a constituency that is wholly or partly within its area;
- (3) The Returning Officer must make representations to the authority as to the location of existing and proposed polling stations within existing and proposed polling places;
- (4) The Returning Officer's representations must be published 30 days after receipt;
- (5) The authority must seek representations and comments on the Returning Officer's representations from:
  - (a) Persons with expertise in relation to access to premises and facilities for persons with different forms of disability; and
  - (b) Any elector;
- (6) On completion of the review the authority must:
  - (a) Give reasons for its decisions in the review; and
  - (b) Publish such information.

Members are asked to note that although not provided for in the legislation it is considered good practice allow the local constituency political parties and independent candidates to also make representations on the review and to comment on the Returning Officer's representations.

This Committee has the following responsibilities:

"To keep under review and to determine the arrangement for the holding of elections and any referendums within the Borough and to initiate or respond to any proposal to the change of ward, constituency or Borough boundaries"

In order to ensure that all political groups can participate in the review, it is proposed that it should be undertaken by a cross-party Review Working Group of the authority.

In addition it is also proposed that a representative from Harrow Association of Disabled People be invited to be a member of the Review Working Group to advise on access to premises and facilities available for persons with different forms of disability.

In the circumstances, it is proposed that this Committee agree to establish a Review Working Group to undertake the review. This group would operate in the same way as the Constitution Review Working Group with a membership of 5, (3 Labour, 2 Conservative) and a representative from Harrow Association of Disabled People. The Review Working Group would have no decision-making powers.

The conclusions of the Review Working Group would be reported to this Committee for approval. The proposed timetable relating to the review is as follows:

## 2.4 Timetable

1 August 2011	Notice of Review
16 September 2011	End of Consultation
September/October	Meeting(s) of Working Group to consider representations
21 November 2011	Report from Working Group to Licensing & General Purposes Committee
1 December 2011	Publication of revised register

In line with the above timetable all current arrangements, including maps of the existing polling district boundaries and locations of polling stations, can be found on the Council's website. All comments may be made directly by email to [pollingdistricts@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:pollingdistricts@harrow.gov.uk)

## 2.5 Financial Implications

No funding is available from Central Government to undertake the review. Therefore, all costs associated with the review must be met from within the current electoral services budget.

## 2.6 Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? **Yes**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

## 2.7 Corporate Priorities

The Review to be undertaken accords with the Corporate Priority of United and Involved Communities - A Council that Listens and Learns.



## 2.8 Equality & Diversity

The duty to conduct the review includes a responsibility to ensure that everyone who is entitled to vote can do so with equality of access – from actual arrangements at the polling station (such as provision of ramps and wide doors to enable those voters in a wheelchair to cast their vote) to the polling station being within reasonable proximity to their home address.

### Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jennifer Hydari	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 2 September 2011		
Name: Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: : 2 September 2011		

### Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:** Pauline Ferris, Democratic & Electoral Services Manager

**Background Papers:** Previous Polling Station Review.

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	YES
2.	Corporate Priorities	N/A

### Proposed Terms of Reference

#### Review of Polling Districts and Places Working Group

- (1) To consult the Returning Officer for every parliamentary election held in a constituency, which is wholly, or partly in its area on the facilities for voting and the accessibility of polling places to all electors (including disabled persons);
- (2) To consider representations made by the Returning Officer as to the location of existing and proposed polling stations, within the existing and proposed polling places;
- (3) To consider all representations made on the review and any comments received on the Returning Officer's representations;
- (4) To make recommendations on the proposed review to the Licensing and General Purposes Committee.