

Food Service Delivery Plan

2024/25

Serving people, Improving lives

FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2024 – 2025

1.0 Current climate

This service plan is produced following the successful 23/24 year where the team caught up with the backlog of overdue inspections which were suspended during the global coronavirus pandemic.

From 1st April 2023 guidance was issued by the Food Standards Agency advising local authorities to:

- Carry out due interventions for establishments that are back in the routine programme of interventions in accordance with the frequencies set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (the Code).
- Work towards realigning with the provisions set out in the Code from 1st April 2023 using the full range of flexibilities already offered by the Code.
- Continue to exercise a risk-based approach to the requirements set out in the Code based on available resource.

The food team successfully delivered the above guidance in 23/24 and cleared the back log of overdue inspections to now bring the inspection programme back on track to deliver inspections in accordance with the risk based inspection due date.

1.1 Service Aim

To regulate food hygiene in food businesses and control the incidence of food borne illness

1.2 Objectives:

- To inspect all food businesses in the Borough in accordance with their risk rating
- To rate food premises in accordance with the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme
- To investigate incidence of food borne illness and control the spread of incidents and liaise with Public Health England
- To collect for analysis food and water samples and take appropriate action upon receipt of results
- To investigate all complaints about food and food hygiene received
- To provide health promotion to improve the health and wellbeing of the local population
- To review and provide comments on planning applications for new food businesses

- The increase the proportion of 4 and 5 rated businesses publicly rated via the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

1.3 Links to Corporate vision, priorities and objectives

The Council vision is “Serving People Improving Lives”.

The Council ambition is we aspire to be regarded as an excellent council by the people and businesses we serve and the staff we employ, by making a positive difference to people’s lives and creating opportunities for everyone to achieve their full potential

Corporate priority	Objectives
<p><u>Place</u></p> <p>To enable a safe, attractive, clean and culturally vibrant borough that plays its part to tackle the climate emergency</p>	<p><u>Community Protection:</u></p> <p>Reducing crime and the fear of crime so that residents feel safe and protected in their neighbourhoods, and the licensing and regulation of businesses for health and hygiene safety.</p>

2.0 Background

2.1 Profile of local authority

The Borough of Gedling covers 120 sq km at the heart of Nottinghamshire, with the City of Nottingham bordering to the south-west. It includes suburban settlements of Arnold, Mapperley, Carlton, Gedling and Netherfield, ten rural parishes and the urban parish of Colwick.

According to the census 2021 the population of Gedling Borough is 117,300 which is an increase of 3.3% since 2011. The Borough has an increasing percentage of around 8.7% of local population that comes from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds while around 18% of local food businesses are operated by people with BME backgrounds. The BME population is spread throughout the Borough and there are no distinct geographical BME communities. The service is fortunate to employ an officer who can speak both Urdu and Punjabi which is an asset to the council when regulating BME businesses

Where possible the service accesses and distributes translated materials which are made available to help businesses comply with their legal responsibilities.

Gedling Borough Council is a non-metropolitan district council providing a wide range of statutory and non-statutory services for the community.



Map of Gedling area

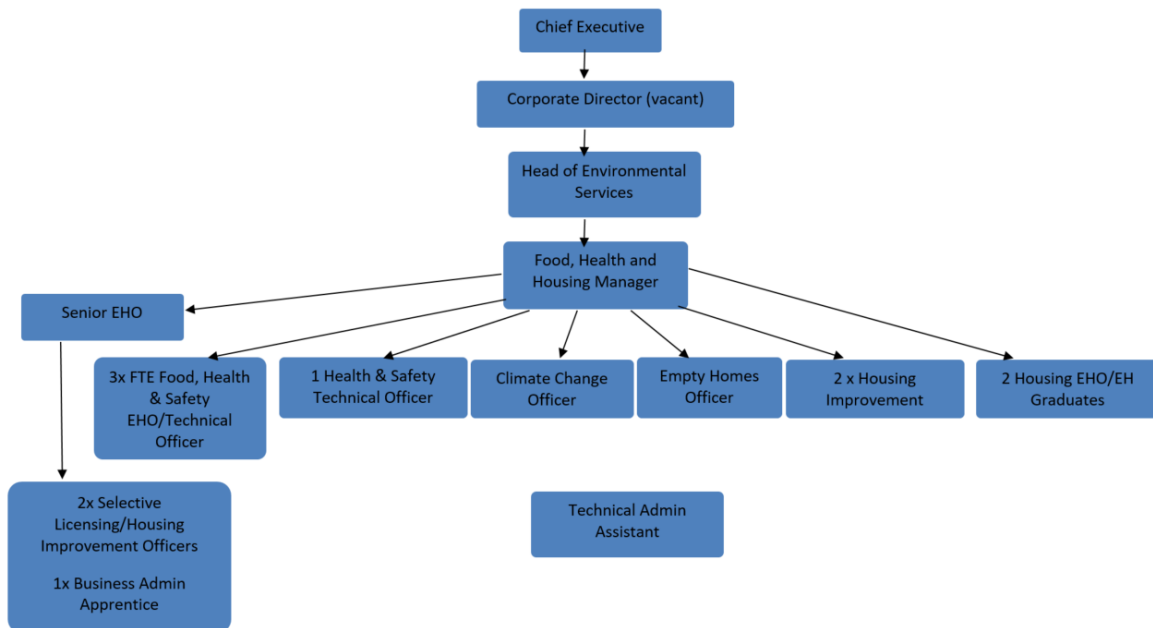
2.1.2 Food Businesses in Gedling

Food businesses are nationally classified according to their risk score allocated during inspection and range from the highest risk category 'A' to the lowest risk category 'E' premises. In April 2024 the risk profile of registered food premises in the area was:

A	B	C	D	E	U	Total
0	17	123	305	366	1	796

U*= currently unclassified businesses requiring inspection (new businesses or found through officer led intelligence).

2.2 Organisational structure



2.3 Scope of service

The food team is managed by the Food, Health and Housing Manager and delivered by three full time equivalent Environmental Health Officer career grade posts who deliver proactive and reactive interventions on an area basis. Three of the employed team are fully qualified EHOs and one has a masters in Environmental Health and Nebosh diploma and is working towards EHO registration and food law code of practice competency. The EHO remit includes regulating food hygiene, health and safety at work, animal and other licensing, and infectious diseases, within three designated areas of the borough.

The service also benefits from additional Health and Safety Technical Officer to support the team with the aim of focussing on non-food matters and thereby freeing up capacity for food interventions.

With regard to food hygiene the team is responsible for: -

- Food hygiene inspections
- Food complaint investigations
- Food and private water supply sampling
- Infectious disease investigations
- Food premise approvals.
- Health education

The food hygiene service operates Monday to Friday during normal office hours. Evening and weekend inspections are carried out at premises who routinely trade at such times.

2.4 Demands of Service

In partnership with the Food Standards Agency the service delivers the National Food Hygiene rating scheme. The scheme provides consumers with information about hygiene standards in food establishments at the time they are inspected to check compliance with legal requirements on food hygiene. The scheme rates premises 0 to 5 premises with 5 being very good, and extends to all food establishments to which registration requirements apply and which supply food directly to consumers for consumption either on or off the premises.

95% of business were rated 4 or 5 on the Food Hygiene Rating scheme at the end of March 2024. The council has consistently ensured over 95% of businesses achieve above a 4 rating.

Food Hygiene Rating	No. of businesses publicly rated	Category
5	607	Very Good
4	48	Good
3	26	Generally Satisfactory
2	2	Improvement Necessary
1	0	Major Improvement Necessary
0	0	Urgent Improvement Necessary

Not all businesses fall under the scope for the Food Hygiene Rating scheme, some are exempt and others such as manufacturers fall outside of the scheme. The table below shows the total risk profile at 1st April 2024 together with the inspections achieved in the previous year up to end of March 2024.

Criteria	Premises category						
	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total
Risk profile (at 1 st April 2024)	0	17	123	305	366	1	796
Insp. Achieved (at end March 2024)*	0	18	91	223	177	N/A	509

The service completed 509 routine food hygiene inspections in 23/24. 2 low risk inspections (1x D rated & 1 x E rated) inspections were not completed within the 28 day due date in 23/24 due to challenges accessing the premises. Of the target achieving 100% of due food inspections 99.6% were completed. This is a great achievement for the service and the ambition in 24/25 will be to achieve the due inspections within 28 days of the due date.

141 new businesses opened or re-registered under a new food business operator in 2023/24.

Presently there are two approved (non-industrial category) meat product premises within the Borough:

- Leivers Brothers Ltd, Brookfield Road, Arnold. (Category 'C' premises)
- Deli Continental Ltd, Pintail Close, Netherfield. (Category 'B' premises)

The Borough does not however contain any specialist or complex food businesses.

2.5 Enforcement policy

The service benefits from a consolidated "Food Document" giving direction and advice on food hygiene matters for officers and which contains the Public Protection Enforcement Policy for this Authority. This document is currently being reviewed and updated. The 'Public Protection Enforcement Policy' takes into account the requirements of the Regulators Code and is made available on the Councils website. The 'Enforcement Policy' is in line with the Food Law Code of Practice and mirror the expectations of the Regulatory Compliance Code (Regulatory Reform Act 2006), Code for Crown Prosecutors, and Regulators Code. Previously this Authority formally adopted the Government's Concordat on Good Enforcement.

Officers routinely implement the Food Standards Agency guidance E.Coli 0157 Control of Cross Contamination and bring matters contained in the guidance to the attention of food business operators where appropriate. The guidance is used as the

standard which food businesses should achieve, for example officers will ensure that businesses do not use of complex equipment that cannot be suitably cleaned such as vacuum packers for raw and cooked meats.

The council has been busy working with businesses during inspection to implement "Natasha's Law" regarding the full labelling requirements for prepacked food which came into force on 1st October 2021 (prepacked for direct sale). Officers have undergone training and are working with businesses to ensure compliance with their legal duties to protect health of those suffering with food allergies.

3 Service Delivery

3.1 Interventions at Food Businesses

The service delivers the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme which rates premises from 0 to 5 depending on risk rating scores for hygiene, structure and confidence in management. The scheme is used to provide consumers with information on hygiene standards in businesses and at the same time drive improvements with businesses.

The inspection programme is based on the inspection rating scheme contained in the FSA Food Law Code of Practice.

Alternative enforcement continues to be undertaken for planned interventions for Category E premises that are exempt from the Food Hygiene Rating scheme in the form of a questionnaire that is often completed by officers over the telephone to determine compliance and whether a physical inspection would be required.

The table below shows details of inspection programme for 2024/25.

Criteria	A	B	C	D	E	U*	Total
Risk profile	0	17	123	305	366	1	796
Actual insp. due	0	17	72	90	84	1	263

U*= currently unclassified businesses requiring inspection (new businesses or found through officer led intelligence).

During the year some existing food businesses may cease trading and some new food businesses will need to be registered and inspected. Officers understand the need to assist new businesses in their start up by providing appropriate and timely help and advice especially during present economic conditions.

Targets:

We will;

- Aim to increase percentage of food businesses that score a rating of 4 or 5 in the national food hygiene rating scheme following inspection.
- Aim to reduce percentage of food businesses that score a rating of 0 or 1 following inspection through education and enforcement.
- Aim to achieve 100% programmed inspections each year, where this has not been possible, as a minimum we will ensure all A, B, and C rated premises are inspected as per their scheduled inspection dates.

3.2 Food Complaints

The Food, Health and Housing team responds to all complaints about food or food premises made to the Council.

- We will aim to respond to food complaints within 3 working days

Complaints regarding labelling etc are forwarded to the Trading Standards Service of Nottinghamshire County Council in accordance with a county wide documented protocol.

Last year the council investigated 51 complaints about food and 16 complaints about food businesses.

3.3 Primary Authority

The Council has not entered into any primary authority partnerships with local businesses. However, we are responsible for regulating a number of businesses that do have primary authority partnerships, and as such we utilise the Primary Authority website to keep up to date with partnership developments and review inspection plans. Where necessary for example if enforcement is required we will liaise with primary authorities.

3.4 Advice to Business

The Authority is committed to improving food safety standards through both education and enforcement. Advice is provided to businesses in the following ways;

- During interventions and as part of follow up documentation,
- Start up advice and information on Council website,
- Distribution of relevant food safety material to food businesses, such as Safer Food Better Business packs,

- Advice and information is given to businesses requesting guidance either by telephone or e-mail.

Across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire local authorities within D2/N2 Local Enterprise Partnership help support new and local businesses.

3.5 Food Sampling

The service is represented at the Nottinghamshire Food Sampling Group where officers from district councils and Public Health England (previously the Health Protection Agency) meet to plan and monitor the sampling program across the whole County. The programme covers district, county, national and when required European sampling objectives. Each authority is allocated sampling credits by Public Health England to undertake this work.

The sampling programme for 2024/25 is shown on the table below .

Table providing planned study timings for 2024-25 Programme:

Year	2024-2025											
Months of sampling	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
Study 80- Cheese	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Study 81- Tattoo/piercing	White	White	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	White	White	White	White
Study 82- Reactive study- Eggs	White	White	White	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

Within the service Food Document an “Infectious Disease Outbreak Plan” is in place having the aim of providing a written procedure to manage and control outbreaks of infectious disease within the community. Linked to the Outbreak Plan is a matrix issued in April 2015 by the former Public Health England (now UK Health Security Agency) which outlines to roles of PHE and the Local Authority when notifications of gastrointestinal infections or legionnaires disease are received. The matrix details what action is required upon receipt of a notification.

3.7 Food Safety incidents

The service receives food safety alerts and product recalls from the Food Standards Agency via the Smarter Communications platform. The platform provides a range of alerts and notifications regarding current issues and also training.

Arrangements are in placed to enable each officer within the section to read the downloaded messages, and to allow appropriate action in response to each message and to document any action. (This encompasses both the receipt of food alert notifications from the Food Standards Agency and situations where the Council needs to notify the Food Standards Agency of a serious localised incident or wider food safety problem).

3.8 Liaison with other organisations

The Authority maintains the following arrangements to ensure that enforcement action taken within the area is consistent with those of neighbouring authorities:

- The Nottinghamshire Food Liaison Group is the inter-authority meeting which amongst other topics will discuss enforcement issues to ensure consistency.
- The Nottinghamshire Food Liaison Group is also the venue where other involved organisations (UK Health Security Agency, Food Standards Agency, Public Analyst, Trading Standards, Nottinghamshire Education Catering, Social Services, Fire and Police Services etc) are able to attend to discuss important food related matters and raise consistency and joint working areas of mutual interest. A joint Trading Standards/Local Authority Enforcement Protocol is in place locally and contains the agreed arrangements for dealing with complaints, food alerts and the registration of food premises.
- Infectious disease issues are discussed at periodic liaison meetings chaired locally by staff from UK Health Security Agency based at Seaton House, London Road, Nottingham.

Within this authority arrangements are in place to allow officers to comment on building control and planning applications to ensure food hygiene and safety issues are incorporated at the planning stage. It also enables the section to identify new food businesses that might require registration.

3.9 Food Safety and Standards promotional work, and other non-official controls interventions

Depending on the topic determined by the Food Standards Agency officers will engage with the annual food safety week promotions.

Other promotional initiatives include barbeque safety promotions in summer months and turkey safety promotions in the run up to Christmas.

The National Food Hygiene Rating scheme has drawn attention from the local media who have provided a number of articles on poorly performing businesses who have scored 0 or 1 on the rating scheme. This coverage provides opportunity to promote the importance of good food hygiene practices.

The NHS reforms have led to Directors of Public Health moving from the NHS to Local Government. Locally in Nottinghamshire this responsibility rests with the County Council where Health and Wellbeing Boards have been formed to oversee improvements in health and wellbeing. The approach is targeted to interventions based on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which identifies priorities for action. The reforms provide opportunity to deliver services in a targeted way to improve health outcomes and may result in targeted promotional work or initiatives. For example obesity has been identified as a priority for action which may result in interventions being delivered by Environmental Health Officers at the same time as delivering food inspections for certain premises.

4.0 Resources

4.1 Financial Allocation

The overall Food and Health and Safety budget is outlined in the table below.

Expenditure Groupings	Original Budget 24/25
Employee Expenses	£226,300
Transport Related Expenses	£3,700
Supplies & Services	£6,700
Supplies & Services Related Recharges	£2,300
Central Support and Service Admin	£64,000
Revenue Income	-£9,900
Transfer from reserves	-£19,000
TOTAL	£ 274,100

4.2 Staffing Allocation

The diagram in section 2.2 of this service plan shows where the Food, Health and Housing team sits within the organisation and the total number of officers within the team. The officers are multi-disciplinary dealing with food, health and safety and housing issues on an area basis. The Food Health and Housing Manager is the lead officer for food hygiene. This position is the most senior recognised Environmental Health Practitioner and member of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health in the authority alongside the Community Protection and Pollution Control Manager. There are now 3 full-time equivalent career graded EHOs dealing with food safety, health and safety at work, infectious diseases, animal and other licensing. A Health and Safety Technical Officer joined the team in 2022.

Where required the food service can call upon support from the other 3 EHOs in the Food, Health and Housing team and the wider support from the Public Protection Service. The workload for the team is shared between 3 'patches' which are a cluster of wards in the north, central, and south parts of the borough.

4.3 Staff Development Plan

Each year staff complete a performance development review with the team manager to discuss and agree any training requirements for the year. All food EHOs and the Lead Officer subscribe to the ABC online food hygiene training platform for CPD regarding food hygiene. The service has a small training budget available for further training as required. The service benefits from low cost training schemes provided by the Food Standards Agency and the East Midlands 5 + 1.

5.0 Quality Assessment and internal monitoring

The quality of the service is assessed and monitored in a number of ways.

- There is a standard inspection proforma exists to guide officers through inspections and ensure they focus on the key requirements during the inspection. This is frequently updated as and when new requirements are introduced.

- The Food, Health and Housing Manager conducts quarterly audits on a selection of food premises files, normally 0, 1 and 2 rated premises and then discussing findings directly with officers to ensure effective action is taken with the business to achieve compliance.
- The Food, Health and Housing Manager each quarter monitors the percentage of businesses achieving 4 or 5 on the food hygiene rating scheme. This information is reported back to management and the target is to achieve above 95%.
- Officers are required to brief the Food Health and Housing Manager where food hygiene enforcement action is required. The manager supports staff to select the most appropriate course of action and monitors compliance with any notices. Where a notice expires officers are required to report the findings on any follow up visits to the manager before deciding the next course of action. The Food, Health and Housing Manager will brief the Head of Service in their weekly meetings of any ongoing enforcement action and where necessary the Portfolio Holder in the monthly service meetings.
- Officers regularly accompany each other on evening visits and on more complex food businesses. The Food, Health and Housing manager accompanies officers on at least two inspections per year.

6.0 Review

Each year the new service delivery plan will review performance against the service delivery plan of the previous year and against any specified performance targets, standards and targeted outcomes.