

CYNGOR **GWYNEDD** COUNCIL



**FOOD SAFETY**

**SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN**

**2009-10**

[www.gwynedd.gov.uk](http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DEFINITIONS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.0 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES .....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Aims .....	6
2.2 Objectives .....	6
2.3 Links to Corporate Objectives .....	6
<b>3.0 BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Profile of Gwynedd.....	9
3.2 Organisational Structure and Reporting Lines .....	9
3.3 Scope of the Food Safety Section.....	10
3.4 Specialist External services/Partners .....	11
3.5 Location of Services.....	11
3.6 Demands on Food Safety Section .....	12
3.7 Enforcement Policy .....	12
<b>4.0 SERVICE DELIVERY.....</b>	<b>14</b>
4.1 Food Premises Interventions .....	14
4.2 Food Complaints .....	17
4.3 Advice to Businesses.....	17
4.4 Food Sampling and Intervention .....	17
4.5 Control of the Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease	18
4.6 Food Safety Incidents .....	18
4.7 Liaison with Other Organisations .....	18
4.8 Food Safety Promotion .....	19
4.9 Food Safety Training for Officers .....	19
4.10 Food Safety Formal Action.....	19
4.11 Safer Food Better Business .....	19
4.12 New Businesses.....	20
<b>5.0 RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>21</b>
5.1 Financial Allocation .....	21
5.2 Current Staffing Levels.....	21
<b>6.0 QUALITY ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>7.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW .....</b>	<b>23</b>
7.1 Review Against the Service Plan .....	23
7.2 Key Service Achievements 2008/09.....	24
7.3 Areas for Improvements 2009/10.....	24

## DEFINITIONS

CEFAS	-	Centre for the Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
CIEH	-	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
CPD	-	Continuing Professional Development
CSIW	-	Care Standards Inspectorate Wales
DPPW	-	Directors of Public Protection Wales
FLARE	-	Public Protection database system
FSA	-	Food Standards Agency
FTE	-	Full Time Equivalent
LA	-	Local Authorities
LACORS	-	Local Authorities Co-ordinating Office on Regulatory Services
MHS	-	Meat Hygiene Service
NPHSW	-	National Public Health Service for Wales
NWDSLGL	-	North Wales and Deeside Shellfish Liaison Group
NWFSTP	-	North Wales Food Safety Technical Panel
PHLS	-	Public Health Laboratory Service
SFBB	-	Safer Food Better Business
SME	-	Small to Medium Sized Enterprises
UK	-	United Kingdom
WFMF	-	Welsh Food Microbiological Forum
WFFU	-	Welsh Food Fraud Unit
WHeEH	-	Welsh Heads of Environmental Health
WHeTS	-	Welsh Heads of Trading Standards
WLGA	-	Welsh Local Government Association
WW	-	Welsh Water

# CYNGOR GWYNEDD COUNCIL

## FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2009-10

### 1.0 Introduction

This service delivery plan details the food safety enforcement service to be delivered in 2009/10 jointly by the Food Hygiene and Food Standards Sections of the Public Protection Service of Gwynedd Council.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) as part of its national food safety framework agreement requires all local authorities to prepare an annual service delivery plan. The plan reflects the work required of food authorities by the FSA, under the requirements of the Food Standards Act 1999 and the framework agreement on local authority enforcement.

The plan seeks to ensure that all national priorities and standards are delivered locally and provides a balanced approach to local food safety enforcement. This is achieved by not merely directing resources towards the programmed intervention process, but also by ensuring that adequate provision is made to address food complaints, food poisoning notifications, advice to businesses, and also the ability to follow-up on intelligence driven areas of work such as sampling, targeted interventions, other reactive interventions and campaign work.

Gwynedd Council is responsible for the enforcement of food safety in 2018 food premises within the County. This includes premises at all stages in the food chain ranging from farm producers of food, food manufacturers and processors through to retail food premises, and restaurants.

For 2009/10 the main focus of the function of the food safety enforcement service will be in the following areas:

- An annual programme of interventions and enforcement in accordance with statutory requirements, codes of practice and guidance.
- An annual sampling programme in support of the intervention programme and other investigative work.
- Investigation of complaints regarding food and food premises, and all outbreaks and incidents of food related illness.
- Acting as “originating authority” to certain food businesses based in Gwynedd and to carry out originating authority enquiries referred by other authorities or agencies.
- Supporting the annual intervention programme with targeted promotional advice and educational initiatives together with providing information and advice on food safety and related matters to food businesses and consumers, and co-ordinating training.

For 2009/10 the following areas of service development and improvements have been identified:

- Maintain food hygiene intervention performance and attempt to carry out

interventions in 100% of high risk businesses and other risk businesses respectively.

- Maintain food standards intervention performance and attempt to carry out interventions in 100% of businesses rated as high risk for food standards and 50% of businesses rated as medium risk which are due for intervention for food standards.
- Continue the progress made in food businesses in implementation of food safety management, namely 'Safer Food Better Business'. (SFBB).
- Undertake customer satisfaction survey for relevant food service areas.
- Introduce a 'Scores on the Doors' scheme for food premises within the County, adopting the FSA scheme.
- Establish contact with new food businesses early in the life of those businesses
- Encourage all primary producers to adopt high standards of food hygiene practices
- Ongoing development of council web pages.
- Further develop and improve joint working programmes internally and with external agencies.

## 2.0 Service Objectives

### 2.1 Aim

The Public Protection Service is committed to ensuring that food and drink intended for sale for human consumption, which is produced, stored, distributed, handled or consumed within the County is without risk to the health and safety of the consumer.

Staff will adopt an approach to enforcement based upon an assessment of the risk to public health and will include the investigation of cases of food poisoning and food complaints as well as the intervention of food premises.

The Public Protection Service has adopted the enforcement concordat and staff will carry out activities in this service plan in accordance with that concordat and the public protection enforcement policy.

Regard will be had to guidance contained in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008 and to guidance from recognised bodies such as the FSA and Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS).

### 2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the food safety section are as follows:

- To carry out an annual programme of food hygiene and food standards interventions and enforcement in accordance with statutory requirements, the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008 and guidance. Subject to the availability of suitably qualified officers, such interventions will be undertaken co-incidentally with interventions undertaken in respect of other statutory functions.
- Support the annual intervention programme with an annual food sampling programme with regard to composition, labelling and microbiological standard.
- Investigate complaints and to take appropriate action in accordance with Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008 and guidance.
- Act as “originating authority” to certain food businesses located in the County of Gwynedd and to respond to originating authority enquiries referred by other local authorities and agencies.
- Support food businesses and consumers with targeted promotional advice and educational initiatives together with providing information and advice on food safety and related matters to food businesses and consumers, and co-ordinating training.

### 2.3 Links to Corporate Objectives

These are the overarching priorities for the Authority and are derived from the Council’s Vision and Values. The strategic objectives are:

- a) ***To create opportunities to enable people to fulfil their full potential in work and in personal and social life.***

- b) Contribute towards creating a competitive, venturous and sustainable economy with a variety of working opportunities.**
- c) Promote better health, care and well-being for individuals, families and communities.**
- d) Promote active, safe and sustainable communities with the provision of suitable houses, facilities and services.**
- e) Protect the heritage, promote the culture of the area, and promote the use of the Welsh language.**
- f) Protect and improve the natural and the built environment of the County, and contribute towards safeguarding the world wide environment.**

The food safety service enhances and contributes to these objectives in the following ways:-

**a) To create opportunities to enable people to fulfil their full potential in work and in personal and social life** - The food safety service aims to protect the health and wellbeing of people who consume foodstuffs in Gwynedd and of those that consume foodstuffs manufactured in Gwynedd. In addition to protecting the residents of Gwynedd, the protection of visitors is essential to maintain and enhance the reputation of the area as a tourist area.

**b) Contribute towards creating a competitive, venturous and sustainable economy with a variety of working opportunities** – The production, processing and retailing of food makes up a significant part of the economy of Gwynedd and provides substantial employment opportunities within the county. Gwynedd is a major primary producer of food, has numerous food processors and catering businesses many of which are linked to the tourist industry together with a wide range of food retailers. The food safety service provides free advice and assistance to these businesses with the objectives of ensuring that that satisfy the needs of their customers, provide employment locally and generate adequate return for their investors. Safeguarding health and wellbeing and promoting a healthy lifestyle is a major catalyst to maintaining a healthy and productive workforce. Monitoring and advising on regulatory standards assists in maintaining a level competition for a sustainable economy.

**c) Promote better health, care and well-being for individuals, families and communities** - Food safety is a key area which is essential for improving and maintaining the health, care and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. Besides maintaining health, the consumption of good food also generates a feeling of wellbeing and provides recreation.

**d) Promote active, safe and sustainable communities with the provision of suitable houses, facilities and services** - The food safety service aims to promote active communities by ensuring that residents have access to healthy food and employment opportunities connected to the production, processing, distribution and

retailing of food. It aims to ensure that the food produced and consumed is safe, and that production is carried out in a sustainable manner.

***e) Protect the heritage, promote the culture of the area, and promote the use of the Welsh language*** – The work of the food safety section supports local food production in this mainly rural County where agriculture and fisheries are an important sector of the economy. The quality of foodstuffs and food premises are essential factors so as to maintain Gwynedd as a key tourist area, protecting the heritage and promoting the culture of the area and maintaining the ability of the area to compete in a global market. The section provides a bi-lingual service at all times and with respect to all aspects of food safety this is essential as 70.19% of the population of Gwynedd speak Welsh.

***f) Protect and improve the natural and the built environment of the County, and contribute towards safeguarding the world wide environment*** - Confident communities with a cohesive language and cultural identity are sustained by a thriving healthy population free from the effects of ill health and disease.

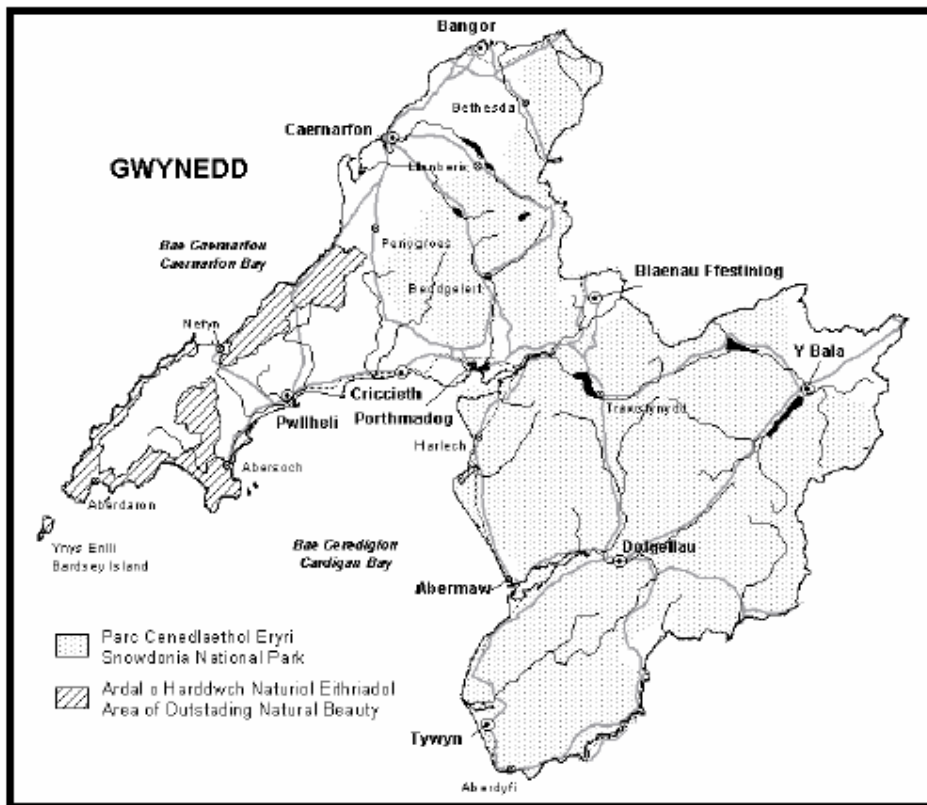


### 3.0 Background

#### 3.1 Profile of Gwynedd

Gwynedd is located in North West Wales. It is the second largest County in Wales, accounting for 12.26% of the total land area, covering an area of 2,548 square kilometres. Gwynedd extends from Abergwyngregyn in the north to Aberdyfi in the south, a road distance of 130 Kilometers, and from Uwchmynydd in the west to Llandderfel in the east; a road distance of 103km. At 301 kilometers, Gwynedd has the longest coastline of all Unitary Authorities in Wales. The main settlements in Gwynedd are Caernarfon, Bangor, Porthmadog, and Dolgellau.

The population of Gwynedd was recorded as 116,843 in the 2001 Census of Population and 117,985 in the 2005 Mid-Year Estimates. There is a concentration of the population resident in the north of the County in Bangor, Caernarfon and surrounding towns and villages.



#### 3.2 Organisational Structure and Reporting lines

The food safety section is located within the Public Protection Service of the Regulatory Department of Gwynedd Council. The food safety section reports to the licensing committee on all food safety matters.

The food safety section sits within the authority structure as follows:



### **3.3 Scope of the Food Safety Section**

The scope of the food safety section is as follows:

- Establishing and maintaining an up to date register of all food premises within the County.
- Planned Interventions of Food Premises – All food businesses are subjected to interventions on regular basis. The frequency of intervention of each food business is programmed according to the food establishment intervention rating scheme as prescribed in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008 which takes into account potential hazards, level of compliance and confidence in management control systems. Officers advise on good practice and ensure compliance with legal requirements.
- Secondary Visits/Revisits – Where the operator of a food business is required to undertake works in order to comply with the food safety legislation, a revisit (secondary intervention) may be undertaken after the date specified for compliance.
- Investigation of Complaints – The section responds to all complaints about food businesses and food purchased within the area of Gwynedd Council. Each complaint is investigated to determine appropriate enforcement and to ensure precautions are taken to prevent a recurrence. This often involves contacting manufacturing companies and other local authorities.
- Identifying new food businesses early in the life of those businesses and visiting those premises to undertake interventions and provide advice and guidance.
- Investigation of Food Borne Illnesses – Notification of cases of food poisoning is received from general practitioners, the National Public Health Service for Wales (NPHSW) and their laboratory services. Each notification is investigated and appropriate action taken to prevent spread of infection.
- Food Hygiene Promotion and Education – As part of the services commitment to promoting public health the service undertakes various food safety initiatives. These have included seminars to local businesses, food safety

week, provision of news letters and providing advice and assistance to businesses at the time of intervention and on request.

- Food Alerts, Allergy Alerts and Incidents –When food and allergy alerts are issued by the FSA in respect of certain foodstuffs and where necessary the section takes all appropriate measures to ensure foods are withdrawn from sale within the County.
- Food Premises Approvals – Certain food operations require prior approval by the local authority. In Gwynedd these include dairy products, meat products, fish products, cold stores and shellfish depuration premises. Premises are inspected prior to issuing approvals and are regularly monitored thereafter to ensure continued compliance with the legal requirements.
- Food Sampling – Sampling is undertaken to monitor food safety standards during interventions and as part of national and local microbiological food sampling programmes.
- Shellfish Sampling - Sampling is undertaken to monitor the hygiene status of designated shellfish production areas.
- Imported Food - Investigate allegations or circumstances which indicate that imported food might be contaminated or has been illegally imported and take necessary action.
- Private Water Supplies - Sampling is undertaken to monitor quality of private water supplies as part of sampling programmes.
- Other Services – Food Safety Officers are expected to address occupational health and safety matters arising during the course of food safety interventions. They also, where necessary, investigate water borne incidents and infectious disease other than food poisoning; comment on applications for premises licences under the Licensing Act 2003 and on planning and building control applications regarding food premises.

### **3.4 Specialist External Services/Partners**

Food Analytical Services	Eurofins Laboratories Ltd
Food Examiner	National Public Health Service for Wales
Proper Officer	National Public Health Service for Wales

### **3.5 Location of Services**

The service is delivered from three area offices which are Swyddfa Ardal Arfon, Caernarfon; Swyddfa Ardal Dwyfor, Pwllheli and Swyddfa Ardal Meirionnydd, Dolgellau. The office opening hours are Monday to Friday 09:00 – 17:00. Out of hours interventions are carried out where premises do not trade during the daytime. It is the policy for food interventions, unless in exceptional circumstances, to be carried out unannounced to allow the actual business operations to be observed.

There is also a plan for an out of hour's service for emergencies.

### 3.6 Demands on the Food Safety Section

Gwynedd contains a mix of manufacturing, retail and catering premises. Catering and retail are the dominant sectors. The businesses are predominantly small to medium sized enterprises (SME).

As on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 we have identified that Gwynedd Council is responsible for enforcing food safety in 2018 food premises within Gwynedd.

The risk assessment programme for food safety is set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008 intervention rating scheme and the criteria provides that all food premises should be subject to a degree of surveillance although the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008 allows alternative enforcement methods to be used with the lowest risk premises.

		<b>Estimated Number of premises (As at 01/04/09)</b>
Premises	Primary Producers	40
	Manufacturers and Packers	93
	Importers and Exporters	0
	Distributors and Transporters	20
	Retailers	470
	Restaurants and Caterers	1395
<b>Total</b>		<b>2018</b>
Of which:	Premises Approved	14

Factors likely to have impact on service delivery this year include:-

- Scores on the Doors – The implementation of a system for scores on the doors throughout the County. Time scale dependant on introduction by FSA Wales.
- SFBB – Continuing introduction of SFBB within food businesses.
- Seasonal Events e.g. Wakestock, Gwyl y Faenol – Proactive and reactive interventions.
- Competence and training requirements for officers.

### 3.7 Enforcement Policy

The food safety section has adopted the government's enforcement concordat which means that it is committed to open and fair enforcement of the law pertaining to food safety. The public protection enforcement policy has been approved by Committee (28 February 2002) and is in accordance with the principles set out in the enforcement concordat.

The enforcement policy can be found on the food safety section's webpage or a paper copy can be obtained from the area offices. Enforcement decisions will be

documented and monitored to demonstrate adherence with the policy. In addition to this there are comprehensive procedures available to ensure consistency of service.

## 4.0 Service Delivery

### 4.1 Food Premises Interventions

#### 4.1.1 Food Hygiene Interventions

The introduction of the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008 has provided food authorities with the option of implementing different types of interventions in specific circumstances to which were previously limited only to an inspection intervention. This suite of different types of interventions provides food authorities with the freedom to target businesses in alternative ways as opposed to the previous inspection only intervention system.

Interventions are defined in the code as activities that are designed to monitor, support and increase food law compliance within a food establishment, they include, but are not restricted to, 'official controls' as defined in Article 2 (1) of Regulation EC 882/2004.

Official control interventions that may be used include inspections, partial inspections, audits, surveillance visits, verification visits, monitoring visits and sampling visits where analysis/examination is to be carried out at an official laboratory. Where circumstances allow and in particular for low risk premises other interventions that are not official controls may be used, these include education, advice, coaching and information gathering.

When determining what type of intervention should be used regard at all times shall be had to the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008. The code details minimum intervention frequencies for specific categories of premises and the type of interventions which may be appropriate, to which are as follows:

Business Risk Category	OFFICIAL CONTROLS										Min Frequency Intervention
	YES								NO		
	I	Pi	A	M	S	V	Sa	E	In		
A/B – FH*	X	X	X								6 Monthly - A 12 Monthly - B
C – FH*	X	X	X								18 Monthly
C – FH* Broadly Compliant <sup>1</sup>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				18 Monthly
D*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	24 Monthly
E – FH*	ALTERNATIVE ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY EVERY 3 YEARS										

#### Key

\* - Food Safety;

<sup>1</sup> - Premises which are able to demonstrate, and have been assessed as, having good conditions, systems and management which score  $\leq 10$  in the rating system (i.e. good premises).

I – Inspection

Pi – Partial Inspection

A – Audit

M – Monitoring  
 S – Surveillance  
 V – Verification  
 Sa – Sampling  
 E – Education, Advice and Coaching  
 In – Information, Intelligence Gathering and Sampling when not Official Control

For 2009/10 the intervention strategy that will be implemented in Gwynedd will be that all premises which are required to be subjected to an intervention in line with the food establishment intervention rating scheme will be subject to at least one inspection intervention and thereafter any other intervention type as required at the discretion of the authorised inspecting officer having regard to the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008.

It has been decided that all premises will to be subjected to at least one inspection in order to accommodate the scores on the doors program which will be implemented in Gwynedd in 2009/10 as part of the Food Standards Agency national scores on the doors program.

The Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008 stipulates that the food establishment intervention rating scheme score can only be changed following an inspection intervention therefore undertaking any other intervention would un necessarily hinder the implementation of the scores on the doors program in Gwynedd due to the scores on the doors system being based on the food establishment intervention rating scheme scoring system.

It is the food safety section’s policy to carry out programmed Food Hygiene interventions in accordance with the minimum inspection frequencies as outlined in the food establishment intervention rating scheme as already mentioned. These interventions are all prioritised in accordance with the food safety risks posed by the premises. This is assessed by consideration of the nature of the food handling involved, the standards maintained, and the quality of management.

The following table shows the premises that will be liable to an intervention in the year 2009/2010. These figures include premises deferred and outstanding from the previous year due to factors such as seasonality closure.

<b>Premise Profile: Food Hygiene (Risk Categories A-E)</b>	<b>Estimated Number of Premises (As at 01/04/09)</b>	<b>Estimated number of interventions required during the year (01/04/09 - 31/03/10)</b>
Category A	35	34
Category B	226	226
Category C	1080	786
Category D	233	112
Category E*	372	267
Outside Programme	9	-
Unrated	63	63
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>1488</b>

It is a target in that the 2009/10 business plan that 95% of the high risk premises (A-C) are completed.

\* Alternative enforcement strategies will be considered for the majority of these low

risk food premises in accordance with the revised Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008. This will either involve a visit as part of another function undertaken by the Food and Health and Safety Section, the Trading Standards Section or questionnaire surveys to assess the hazards and risks associated with the businesses. Where risks are perceived as low information packs will be sent out to businesses to assist them with compliance with food safety legislation and good practice. Where intelligence through complaints or routine sampling, for example, suggests that problems may exist, those premises will be inspected as a matter of course.

#### **4.1.2 Revisits**

Revisits will be undertaken where there are concerns about food safety. It is anticipated that revisits will be undertaken to the majority of high risk A and B rated premises.

#### **4.1.3 Food Standards Interventions**

It is the food safety section's policy to prioritise interventions carried out at food businesses in respect of Food Standards in accordance with the food safety risks posed by the premises. This is assessed by consideration of the nature of the food handling involved, the standards maintained, and the quality of management following a recommended Risk Assessment process. The section has recently changed from using the LACORS 'total business activity' risk assessment scheme to the specific food standards scheme contained in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008 and is currently reassessing the Risk rating of businesses for Food Standards Risk.

It is the food safety section's policy to carry out programmed Food Standards interventions in respect of Category A (High Risk) premises in accordance with the minimum intervention frequency specified in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008, i.e. every 12 months.

Because of shortage of resources and commitments to other enforcement regimes, it is not possible to carry out programmed Food Standards interventions in respect of Category B (Medium Risk) businesses in accordance with the minimum frequency specified in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008, i.e. every 24 months. It is the policy of the authority that such businesses should be subject to an appropriate intervention with a minimum frequency of half that specified, i.e. every 48 months. In practice, it is expected that this level of performance will be exceeded.

Because of the shortage of resources, it is the food safety section's policy not to carry out programmed Food Standards interventions in respect of Category C (Low Risk) businesses as a matter of routine. However, because of the need to revise risk assessments of businesses so categorized, Category C premises will be inspected when it is necessary to visit those premises in connection with interventions carried out in respect of other enforcement activities. Consideration will also be given to implementing alternative enforcement strategies at such premises when resources permit.

The following table shows the interventions that need to be carried out in the year 2009/2010 in accordance with the minimum intervention frequency specified in the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008.



<b>Premise Profile: Food Standards (Risk Categories A-C)</b>	<b>Estimated Number of Premises (As at 01/04/09)</b>	<b>Estimated number of primary interventions required during the year (01/04/08 - 31/03/10)</b>
Category A	15	14
Category B	778	469
Category C	1107	206
Outside Programme	30	-
Unrated	88	60
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>749</b>

## **4.2 Food Complaints**

All food complaints are investigated. It is the food safety section's policy to give a first response within 5 working days to all food and food premises complaints. The section receives approximately 100 complaints a year with respect to foodstuffs and food premises.

It is estimated there will be 105 food complaints in the year 09/10.

## **4.3 Advice to Business**

The food safety section offers advice to any business that has trading premises within Gwynedd unless the trader has a Primary Authority arrangement with another local authority. This is achieved by providing advice directly to businesses and through the provision of training courses which are held locally e.g. SFBB training courses.

It is estimated that a minimum of 2 training courses will be held in the year 09/10, dependant on resources.

The food safety section is continually developing its webpage in order to improve, in particular, the access to specialist food safety advice.

## **4.4 Food Sampling and Inspection**

The food safety section undertakes sampling of food and drink supplied, produced and sold within the County, in accordance with a planned sampling programme to assess its safety and quality and where necessary, in response to food complaints/investigations. The food safety section will also participate in North Wales, UK and European sampling programmes where relevant. The Gwynedd Council food hygiene sampling policy 2009/10 provides more in depth information regarding food sampling and is available to view on the food safety section web page. A detailed sampling plan has also been produced for 09/10 which details the type of foodstuffs which are to be sampled.

A minimum of 180 routine food samples will be taken in 09/10.

The food safety section undertakes routine sampling of shellfish harvesting area to monitor the hygiene status of the shellfish harvesting areas. Data obtained from the sampling is used in maintaining the classification status of shellfish harvesting areas.

Food samples are analysed by the Public Health Laboratory Service (PHLS) based in Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor; the Public Analyst, (Eurofins Scientific Laboratories) in Chester, and the Centre for the Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) laboratories are used occasionally.

#### **4.5 Control of the Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease**

The food safety section investigates all outbreaks and notifications of food related disease in accordance with accepted procedures and advice from its Proper Officer.

Between the NPHSW and the food safety section, there are formal arrangements in place to identify and investigate cases of food poisoning. All laboratory identified cases of food poisoning are notified directly to the food safety section for investigation.

All incidents of food poisoning or alleged food poisoning are investigated with a view to tracing the source and preventing spread and reoccurrence.

It is estimated there will be 218 food poisoning cases and 1 potential outbreaks in the year 09/10.

#### **4.6 Food Safety Incidents**

The FSA declares food safety incidents from time to time and notifies food authorities of these electronically by email and/or text message. Some of the notifications are for information only and some are for action.

The section has a documented procedure for dealing with Food Safety Incidents Alerts following notification through the Food Alert or Allergy Alert system.

It is estimated there will be 72 food/ allergy alerts received in the year 09/10.

#### **4.7 Liaison with other Organisations**

The food safety section participates with the following liaison groups or organisations related to food safety issues in an endeavour to ensure that the service and/or any enforcement action taken within the County of Gwynedd is consistent with those of neighbouring local authorities, that service improvements can be identified, and that competence based training can be accessed.

- Directors of Public Protection Wales (DPPW)
- Welsh Heads of Environmental Health Group (WHeEH)
- Wales Heads of Trading Standards (WHeTS)
- North Wales Food Safety Technical Panel (NWFSTP)
- North Wales Heads of Trading Standards Food & Metrology Group
- Welsh Food Microbiological Forum (WFMF)
- National Public Health Service for Wales (NPHSW)
- North Wales and Deeside Shellfish Liaison Group (NWDSLGL)
- Care Standards Inspectorate Wales (CSIW)

- Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)
- Welsh Water (WW)
- Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS)
- Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Meat Hygiene Service (MHS)
- Welsh Food Fraud Unit (WFFU)
- Gwynedd Licensing Section (GLS)

#### **4.8 Food Safety Promotion**

The food safety section carries out health promotion exercises covering food safety and hygiene. This includes the provision of hazard analysis training, food hygiene awards, and to undertake activities in the national food safety week. The food safety section will be participating in the 2009 food safety week.

#### **4.9 Food Safety Training for Officers**

A staff training programme is being prepared for 2009/10. Staff training needs are identified during the appraisal process and a training programme is developed once this process is complete.

It is the policy of the food safety section to comply fully with the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2008 in relation to staff training and the qualifications of authorised officers. This requires that appropriately trained and experienced officers must undertake food safety work. This necessitates access to external training on specialist topics, supplemented by regular in-house update training for authorised food safety officers.

It is the food safety section's policy to ensure that officers involved in enforcing food safety legislation receive a minimum of 15 hours continuing professional development training.

#### **4.10 Food Safety Formal Action**

All enforcement action will be taken having regard to the Public Protection Enforcement Policy. This may range from informal action, through to the service of formal hygiene improvement or emergency prohibition notices, or ultimately the issue of cautions or recommendations for prosecution. The main aim is to ensure that all food businesses within Gwynedd produce food that is safe to eat and that they comply with the requirements of the food safety legislation. This enforcement policy can be accessed through the Council's website.

#### **4.11 Safer Food Better Business (SFBB)**

To assist proprietors of food businesses in meeting the new legal requirements which came into force in January 2006, the FSA has introduced a simplified food safety management system, SFBB, that they suggest should be promoted to food businesses that need assistance with hazard analysis requirements.

In 2009/10 we will continue to promote the uptake of this food safety management model where applicable within the County of Gwynedd and where resources allow continue to hold training seminars.

#### **4.12 New Businesses**

All new food businesses in Gwynedd are subjected to an intervention visit and are provided with advice and guidance to ensure that those businesses are compliant with food safety legislation from the outset.

In 2009/10 we will continue to visit new businesses, undertake interventions and provide advice and guidance to every new business.

## 5.0 Resources

### 5.1 Financial Allocation

Total gross cost of the food safety section is £662,240 of which staffing costs accounts for approximately 80% of the total cost. The total gross cost of the food safety section based on the 2005 mid year population estimates works out at approximately £5.61 per Gwynedd resident.

### 5.2 Current Staffing Levels

At the time of writing there are 14.3 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) officers within the food safety section. The above figure can be broken down into officers as detailed below:

	<b>Number</b>
Environmental Health Officers/Trading Standards Officers	5.0/1.1
Food Safety Officers/Enforcement Officers	4.3/1.2
Food Sampling Officers/Food Technical Officers	1/1.0
Public Protection Manager (Food and H&S)/(T.S)	0.5/0.2
<b>TOTAL (FH/FS)</b>	<b>10.8/3.5</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>14.3</b>

## **6.0 Quality Assessment**

The food safety section has been audited by the FSA and will continue to act on any advice given to ensure a quality service is provided. There is an internal monitoring process to ensure officers are following the procedures and acting in accordance with statutory requirements.

## **7.0 Review and Monitoring**

### **7.1 Review Against the Service Plan**

The service delivery plan will be reviewed at least annually and reported to the licensing committee. The review will link into the annual business planning process.

Performance is monitored monthly with a quarterly management review of progress.

Performance is monitored using the following methods:

- Monitoring performance against service and officer targets.
- Monitoring actual working practices against procedures and protocols for:
  - Intervention of food businesses
  - Investigation of complaints and food poisoning notifications
  - Enforcement
- Undertake customer satisfaction surveys for relevant areas of the food safety section. The level of performance for 08/09 (as on 06/04/09) was 97.5% for Food Hygiene and 93% for Food Standards.

#### Monitoring arrangements: Food Hygiene

Performance monitoring will be undertaken by generating monthly reports from the FLARE database on:

- Interventions undertaken compared to those due.
- Interventions records for each officer along with risk profiles of all interventions completed.
- Complaints where no responses has been made.
- Complaints which remain open.
- Legal cases in progress.
- Poor food sample results with no follow up action.
- Outstanding notices.

Working practices will be monitored routinely through close contact between the food safety officers and the Public Protection Manager and by:

- Submission of inspection reports including copy letters to Public Protection Manager for scrutiny of at least 2%.
- Scrutiny of at least 2% complaint/ service request/sampling and food poisoning notification files.
- Referral of contentious issues and formal enforcement to Public Protection Manager / Senior Public Protection Manager for confirmation of action being taken.
- At least one annual joint food hygiene intervention between Food Safety Officers and at least one annual monitoring intervention between the Public Protection Manager and each Food Safety Officer.

## Monitoring Arrangements – Food Standards

The Public Protection Manager will monitor performance by generating 3 monthly reports from the FLARE database in respect of

- Interventions which will be compared against the annual programme.
- Service requests which will be used to monitor progress.

Working practices will be monitored routinely through close contact between all staff undertaking Food Standards enforcement and the Public Protection Manager (Trading Standards).

In addition, Senior Trading Standards Officers will monitor the working practices of the staff within their Teams by:

- Scrutinizing at least 2% of intervention reports.
- Scrutinizing at least 2% complaint/ service request/sampling and Food Alert notification files.
- Conducting at least one annual monitoring intervention per member of staff.

The Senior Trading Standards Officers may delegate this duty to the Trading Standards Officer in respect of monitoring the working practices of Technical Officers. The Senior Trading Standards Officers will also monitor each other.

At the end of the service plan period the food safety section will compare the years performance targets and performance standards included in this service plan. Any variation and the reasons for the variation will be included in the review and any service development or improvement will be identified as necessary.

### **7.2 Key Service Achievements 2008/09**

In addition to routine work, significant progress has been made in relation to overall service improvements. Key service achievements over the period of last years plan include: -

- Level of intervention of high risk premises for food hygiene improved from 94% to 97%
- Five SFBB training days held
- Ongoing development of food safety section web pages
- Two successful prosecutions of food business undertaken for food hygiene offences

### **7.3 Areas for Improvement 2009/10**

The following areas of service development have been identified for 2009/10: -

- Attempt to improve level of food hygiene intervention of high risk premises to 100% .
- Consolidate the progress made in food businesses following the successful



completion of the SFBB project.

- Introduce a 'Scores on the Doors' scheme for food premises within Gwynedd adopting the FSA scheme.
- Undertake customer satisfaction survey for relevant food service areas.