

Food Enforcement Plan

2010 – 2011

Trading Standards



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Aims and objectives

To protect consumers by working to achieve a fair and honest trading environment and to safeguard the health and well being of the community.

Consumer health, nutrition and economic welfare

We have established, through consultation, that our consumers are most concerned about the labelling, misleading information and health claims attributed to food. Due to the rural nature of the county we will direct some of our activities at food that is produced, supplied and marketed locally.

The focus of the plan for the coming year will be on those food issues that most impact on the health, nutrition and economic welfare of our consumers, especially the vulnerable. We will build on our previous work by looking at foods intended for particular groups such as the very young, children of school age and the elderly. Particular emphasis will be placed on programmes of consumer and business education, and information targeted at groups of consumers or areas where there is the greatest need. Our interventions will be used to support these programmes.

Our work will contribute to the Local Area Agreement target to reduce childhood obesity in Years R and 6(NI 56).

Useful websites:

- Food Standards Agency eat well, be well - helping you make Healthier Choices (<http://www.eatwell.gov.uk/>)
- Food group for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire. (<http://www.local-food.net/>)
- Salt (<http://www.salt.gov.uk/>)
- NHS Change 4 life (<http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/default.aspx>)

Background

Buckinghamshire is a large rural county of 156,509 hectares close to London.

Responsibility for food enforcement is shared between two tiers of local government - the County Council and four District councils. These authorities have been granted Pathfinder status by the government and are looking at ways of working even more closely together in the future. The Bucks Food Liaison group in particular is a forum for increasing coordination and cooperation on food issues and meets regularly every quarter.

Trading Standards is responsible for food standards, which includes food composition, ingredients and labelling of food. The District Councils Environmental Health services are responsible for matters of food safety, hygiene, cleanliness and the food borne causes of illness.

Business and the economy.

Three-quarters of employment in the county is within the service sector, contributing significantly to the prosperity of Buckinghamshire. The county also supports a large number of small businesses.

There are a small number of significant food manufacturers and importers for which we act as Home/Originating authority. As yet none of our food companies have requested a Primary Authority relationship although we continue to raise awareness of this opportunity with appropriate businesses.

There are just over 2,300 farms in the County. Approximately 1,700 farms keep livestock that could form part of the food chain. The remainder of the farms are grazing lets, equestrian and arable farms.

There are approximately 475 primary producers in our area.

Challenges

The Council has to balance economic growth against the protection of a high quality rural environment. The Council needs to identify and support opportunities for those who live and work in the countryside as well as those who live in the urban environment. We have a role to play here.

We recognise that in the long term there will be a growth in the leisure side of food provision, restaurants, takeaways, clubs and bars combined with a shortage of suitable local staff to run them. There will be a demand for these premises to have extended opening hours and potentially an increased variety of food provision.

Given the number of farms with livestock there will still be a need to promote the control of feedingstuffs to provide accountability for its quality in order to

maintain the credibility of the farming community and integrity of the food chain.

Related information

- Home Authority Principal
(<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/content/index.jsp?contentid=-1948514607>)
- Primary Authority (<http://www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/bre/inspection-enforcement/implementing-principles/sanctions-bills/page44047.html>)

Useful websites:

- Aylesbury Vale District Council
- Chiltern District Council
- South Bucks District Council
- Wycombe District Council

Demands on us

Profile of food and feedingstuffs premises in the County:

Food premises in Buckinghamshire

Total business premises	12046
Total food premises	2910
Food manufacturers/ packers/ importers	56
Primary producers	475

Feedingstuff premises in Buckinghamshire

On farm mixers	182
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Service delivery points

Our Aylesbury office is open to the public to visit from 9.30am - 1.30pm
Monday - Friday.

Animal Health officers attend Foscote market on Mondays and when a cattle market is held on Thursdays.

We operate an out-of-hours emergency call out number, which can be used to contact our officers in an emergency. For more information call 0845 3708090

Related information

- Consumer Advice
(<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/content/index.jsp?contentid=998032578>)

Liaison with other organisations

We work in partnership with;

- Other Enforcement Agencies
- Trading Standards Institute
- Buckinghamshire Chinese Association
- District Councils
- Business link
- Trading Standards South East Liaison Group
- Other Local authorities
- Bucks Food Liaison Group
- Bucks Healthy Schools
- The Primary Care Trust
- Other charitable organisations such as the Coeliac Society

Food and feedingstuffs safety and standards promotion

Our publicity programme will be targeted at publicising the findings of our work on issues impacting on the health, nutrition and economic welfare of consumers and providing both consumer and business education to mitigate any barriers that may exist.

We carry this out by:

- Attending and participating in Community events, seminars and exhibitions.
- Issuing regular press releases and participating in interviews with the media.
- Promoting and taking part in national and local campaigns, such as Salt Awareness Week, Five a Day campaigns.
- Window Displays in our shop front offices.
- Static displays around the county.
- Giving talks to consumers and businesses
- Attending and participating in appropriate meetings and workshops

Food surveys – projects

Each year officers undertake various projects where information is gained that can usefully help consumer choice and businesses improve their products

In 2009-10 the following are examples of projects that were undertaken.

Nursery foods

This project involved working with nurseries to analyse the nutritional content of food they provide to the children in their care and working with them to make the provision healthier.

GM Oils

Surveying if catering establishments were using GM cooking oil and if they were ensuring they were making this known to consumers

Side order dishes

Establishing what fat, saturated fat and salt levels were present in what are usually advertised as side dishes in catering establishments.

Foods marketed at children

Updating our information on sugar, salt and fat levels in foods and meals aimed at children and marketed as healthier

Value foods

We participated in a south east regional project looking at fat, sugar and salt levels in various value foods

Imported foods

We took part in the Food Standards Agency imported foods sampling survey looking at levels of contaminants in different foodstuffs

Organisational structure

The County Council has brought services and functions together into portfolios for which a Cabinet Member holds responsibility. Within the portfolio, services and functions may be combined for managerial, operational and administrative purposes. The Trading Standards service is currently part of the Localities and Safer Communities service.

Enforcement information

The Service has a documented Enforcement Policy and has also signed up to the Cabinet Office Enforcement Concordat.

Related pages

- Enforcement policy
(<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/content/index.jsp?contentid=123211807>)

Quality assessment

We have:

- Peer reviews
- Investors in People Award
- Charter Mark status

We base our operational approach on systems thinking and officers follow the principles established by this method.

Useful websites:

Investors In People
(<http://www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>)

Review against 2009-10 plan

Variance from the service plan 2009-10

The activities identified in the 2009-10 service plan have been delivered.

Our service review is issued in the form of a newsletter called Food Matters.

Related pages

Food surveys (<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/content/index.jsp?contentid=-934971150>)

Food Matters newsletter

Resources

Financial

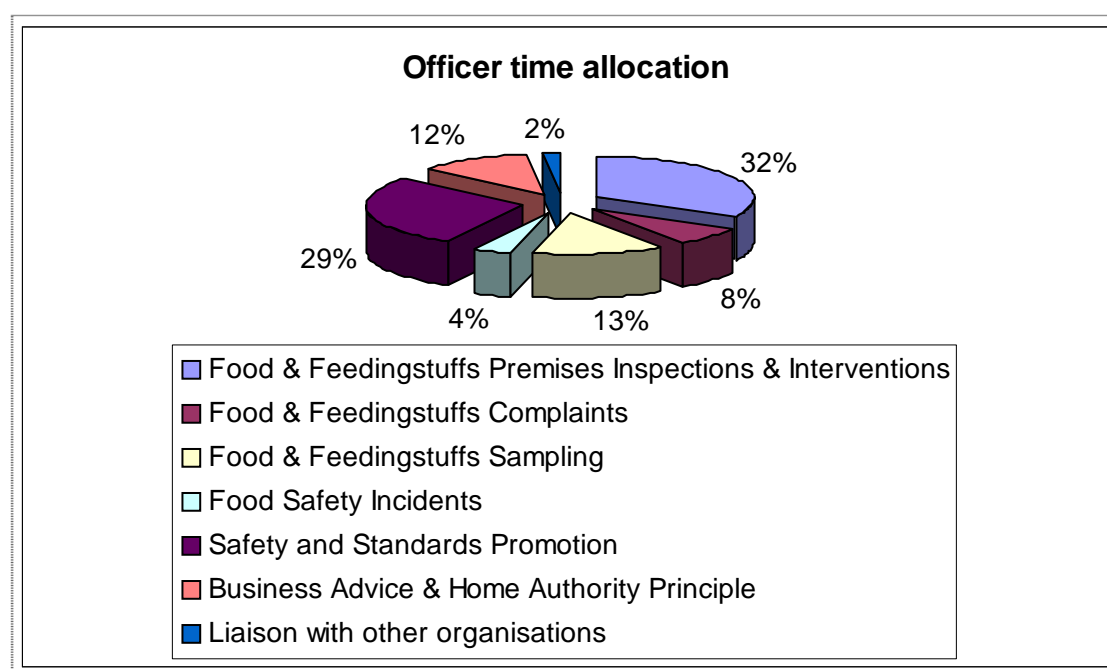
Staff (full time equivalents)	Food	Farm feedingstuffs
Operational	3.5	0.3
Managerial	0.5	0.05
Support	0.3	0.05
Total	4.3	0.4
Total full time staff	4.7	

Financial

Costs	Food	Farm feedingstuffs	Totals
Staff costs (including overheads)	£157,366	£14,638	£172,004
Project & sampling costs	£31,500	£10,700	£42,200
Total cost	£188,866	£25,338	£214,204

Staff

Officer allocation	Resource
Food & Feedingstuffs Interventions	1.5
Food & Feedingstuffs Complaints	0.4
Food & Feedingstuffs Sampling	0.7
Food Safety Incidents	0.2
Safety and Standards Promotion	1.2
Business Advice & Home Authority Principle	0.6
Liaison with other organisations	0.1
Total	4.7



Staff development plan

Authorised food officers are qualified in accordance with Food Standards Agency Code of Practice.

We operate a staff appraisal scheme and managers work closely with officers to enable us to identify training needs and provide ongoing training. These needs may be met by coaching within the day to day work and external formal provision.

Where significant changes to food or enforcement law and food technology occur relevant training will be identified and provided by one of the means above.