



Regulatory Committee

Thursday 5th June 2025

Subject: Food and Health and Safety Work Plan 2025/2026

Report by:	Director - Change Management, ICT and Regulatory Services
Contact Officer:	Andy Gray Housing and Enforcement Manager andy.gray@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To provide Committee with the Food, Health and Safety Work Plan 2025/2026 for approval.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

Committee are asked to:

- a) Approve the Food, Health and Safety Work Plan as detailed at Appendix 1.
- b) Approve that an update on progress against the plan is brought to Regulatory Committee at its December 2025 meeting.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The Council is required to produce and approve a work plan that is in line with both the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement, and the Statement of Commitment agreed nationally between Local Authority Representatives and the Health and Safety Executive.

The Food Act 1990 as amended by the Food Safety act 1990 provides the legal background for the provision of these services by the Council.

Financial: FIN/18/26/RG/SSc

This report seek approval for the Food, Health and Safety Work Plan as detailed in Appendix 1, which is funded by the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) budget for Food Safety approved by Committee in March 2025. See summary table below.

6011 - Food, Health & Safety	2025/26 Base Budget	2026/27 Base Budget	2027/28 Base Budget	2028/29 Base Budget	2029/30 Base Budget	2030/31 Base Budget
Employees	258,900	237,600	243,700	249,400	257,300	263,400
Supplies & Services	9,500	5,600	5,900	6,200	6,500	6,500
Support services	49,700	53,300	53,400	54,300	56,100	56,100
Transport	200	200	200	200	200	200
Income & Fees	(7,400)	(7,400)	(7,400)	(7,400)	(7,400)	(7,400)
Grand Total	310,900	289,300	295,800	302,700	312,700	318,800

Staffing :

The report identifies the staffing resource available to the service and how they are deployed in order to meet the Council's statutory responsibilities.

The report also outlines the resourcing challenges that may arise as a result of the number of routine food hygiene inspections required.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

There are no implications noted.

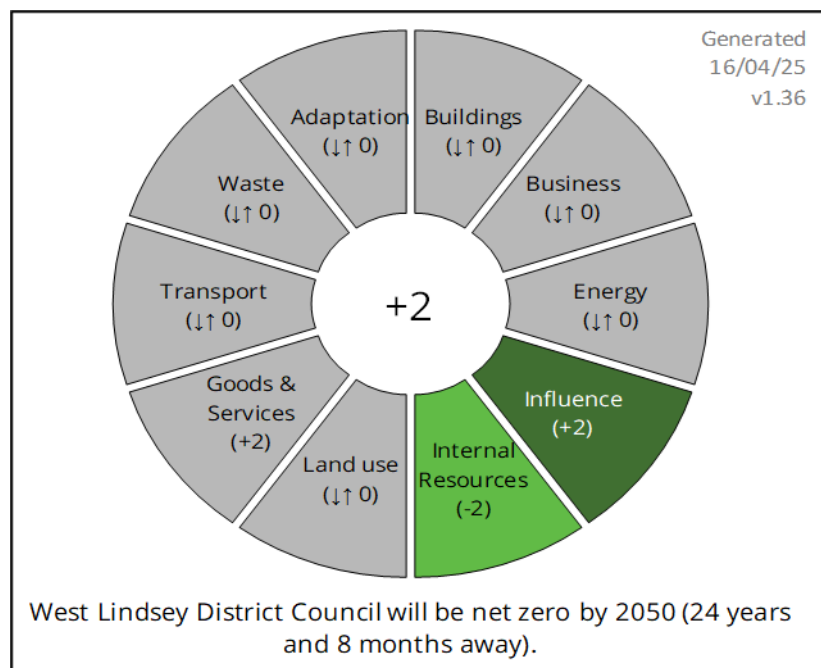
Data Protection Implications :

There are no implications noted.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

In relation to the climate, this work plan seeks to deliver a number of the Council's statutory obligations focussed on food and health and safety. Within this there are opportunities to positively impact climate related risks through advice and engagement that can be provided to food businesses. Officers will also provide advice and guidance in regard to minimising food waste.

This mainly relates to advice and guidance in regard to waste and the appropriate practices for its disposal and storage.



Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :

There are no direct implications within this report. In line with the Council's Corporate Enforcement Policy this work area seeks to ensure that other agencies are engaged where necessary to address specific concerns.

Health Implications:

The delivery of an effective Food and Health and Safety Work Plan has a clear and direct impact on the health of the Districts residents. The plan seeks to ensure that Food Hygiene Standards are maintained in line with legislation and that Health and Safety incidents are investigated accordingly.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

None noted.

Risk Assessment :

Maintaining Food Hygiene Inspection Requirements – the inability to deliver the required number of inspections could lead to intervention from the Food Standards Agency, who would require improvements to be made in line with a clear plan of action.

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes☐**No**☐**Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes☐**No**☐

1. Introduction

1.1. The Council is required to produce and approve a work plan that is in line with the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement and the Statement of Commitment agreed nationally between Local Authority Representatives and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This plan covers all work undertaken within the Housing and Environmental Enforcement work area relating to Food and Health and Safety.

1.2. The purpose of the work plan (shown in appendix 1) is to set out how the Council delivers its official controls and fulfils its duties under food, health and safety, public health and drinking water legislation.

2. Context

2.1. There are currently 981 food businesses registered within the district, a small increase from 978 in 2024. Since 2010/11 the average number of registered food businesses annually has been 955.

2.2. The work area have also been seeking to meet the Council's obligations in regard to proactive health and safety inspections and the additional temporary capacity within the team has enabled this to occur.

3. Service Demand in 24/25

3.1. The table below shows the demand placed on the service over the last 4 years.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total Routine Planned Food Hygiene Inspections (A to D, & Unrated)	198*	447	228	376
Completed Food Hygiene Inspections	172 (87%)	418 (91%)	229 (100%)	336 (89%)
Food Inspection Visits (inc. abortive)	210	542	355	433
Food Inspection Revisits (additional)	26	131	50	91
Request for Revisit (FHRS)	2	17	3	9
Health & Safety Intervention Visits		32	5	10
Health & Safety Targeted Interventions		20	0	16
Funeral Parlour Inspections				9
Total				25
Food / H&S Complaints and Service Requests (note 2020/21 figure includes covid related complaints and service requests)	395	247	247	180
Service Requests Requiring a Premises Visit (additional)	28	39	51	51
Accident Investigations	2	1	0	6

RIDDOR Reports	64	50	51	43
Infectious Disease Reports	50	47	29	22
Sampling Undertaken	0	24	1	14

3.2. The figure of 376 total routine planned food hygiene inspections (A to D) reflected the number of inspections required from the FSA within the 23/24 period. The higher volume delivered in 2022/23 reflects the increased inspections that were required in order to return to the normal food hygiene inspection regime following on from the Covid-19 pandemic, which generated a significant backlog.

3.3. There is a level of uncaptured demand that relates to general advice and queries that arise as part of the day-to-day work relating to food and health and safety. The total number of visits in 24/25 was 433. The offering of advice provides additional value and support to businesses in the district and help to ensure that strong relationships are in place and maintained.

3.4. During 24/25 the work area also completed inspections of funeral parlours on behalf of the Government, due to an investigation taking place in East Riding which uncovered gross negligence within this area of work. These inspections were voluntary and 9 were undertaken (all premises within area) and were based on the potential risk presented by these premises that are largely unregulated.

3.5. Officers also continued to carry out targeted health and safety interventions at the relevant premises to check for compliance following on from the previous inspections in 22/23. Alongside this the work area responds to health and safety incidents that require investigation and also had a proactive presence across the 3 operational days of the Lincolnshire Show.

4. Approach to Food Hygiene Inspections in 25/26

4.1. The Food Law Code of Practice (March 2021) provides the opportunity for a range of interventions in relation to food premises. The approach that the Council takes regarding these interventions is linked to its Corporate Enforcement Policy, which officers have regard for when making any decision. The planned programme of intervention is shown in the table below:

Category	Inspection Frequency	No of Premises
A	6 months	2
B	12 months	27
C	18 months	74
D	24 months	130

E	36 months	345
UNRATED		57

4.2. The above table represents the scheduled normal routine inspection program for the 25/26 financial year of 635. Of these, 290 require a physical food hygiene inspection in the current financial year, and 345 category E are inspected via an Alternative Enforcement Strategy. The alternative enforcement strategy is a paper-based exercise for premises that do not require a physical inspection due to their E rating.

4.3. Within the 345 category E inspections, 64 of these have been allocated to have a physical inspection as their last inspection was prior to 2016. These category Es are not a priority for inspection, however form part of our requirement to demonstrate our strategy for low risk premises.

4.4. Food hygiene inspections undertaken, which do not form part of the routine inspection program, are estimated to increase this number by 20 to 30% to these figures.

Non-routine inspections include: -

- Paid for food hygiene inspections undertaken as part of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.
- Food hygiene inspections undertaken as part of a complaint investigation.
- New food businesses opening after 1st April 2025.
- Changes to the risk rating, resulting in more frequent inspection.

4.5. Therefore, the true food inspection program, comprising of both the routine planned and unplanned inspection programme is estimated at between 412 and 441 food hygiene inspections required in the current financial year 25/26, which would be an increase from the 336 achieved in 24/25.

4.6. With the existing staffing resources available and the current temporary contract in place until the end of October 25, there is no certainty that the required number of inspections would be completed.

4.7. The number of scheduled inspections from 412 to 441 in 25/26 is beyond the number of inspections undertaken during 24/25, when the additional temporary resource was in place.

5. Resources

5.1. There are currently 5 officers authorised to undertake food and/or health & safety related work within the Council. This relates to 4 FTE posts to deliver the food and health and safety service plan. This translates to:

- 1 FTE Senior Environmental Health Practitioner
- 3 FTE Food and Health and Safety operational inspecting officers

(Note. 1 FTE Food and Health & Safety operational inspecting officer is currently on a temporary contract expiring at the end of October 2026).

A further 0.3 FTE, towards delivery of the food and health & safety function, is provided by administrative support, which is currently delivered via the Business Support Apprentice role.

5.2. The 0.2 FTE fixed term contract officer that carried out inspections of harder to reach an out of hours premises ceased operating for the Council in April 2025 but had not carried out any inspections since December 2024. It is not expected that this arrangement will be extended, however they are a resource that is available should it be required.

5.3. It is evident that since the introduction of the additional FTE on a fixed-term basis the service performance has improved significantly. Currently, they are on a fixed-term contract arrangement as an EHO until the end of October 2026. Whilst the improvement in performance would be a key factor in seeking to ensure the staff member was retained with us for an additional period, they are also someone who the Council has invested significant time and resource to, in order to help them to obtain their qualifications and ensure they are working in a way that is in line with the Council's ethos.

5.4. A further proposal is being developed to seek to ensure that a permanent role can be put in place to support the service.

6. Service Risks

6.1. As we have moved into the 25/26 inspecting year, there are a number of risks within the service, which are expected to have an impact on its delivery moving forward. These risks are outlined below:

- An inspection target of 90% may not be achieved without additional inspecting capacity being agreed.
- Additional demand on Senior EHOs reducing availability to complete inspections.
- Inability to complete proactive health and safety inspections.
- Service system transition to CRM.

END