

Licensing and Protection Committee – 18 June 2026

Report by: Kate Penn
Public Protection Manager –
Environmental Health
Head of Service: Clara Kerr

Lead Cllr: Councillor Nathan Hunt
Executive Councillor for Resident
Services and Corporate Performance



Wards
All

Open / Exempt
Open

Key Decision?
No

Monitoring Report on the delivery of the Service Plans for Food Law Enforcement and Health and Safety Regulation

Executive Summary:

The Service Plans for Food Law Enforcement and Health and Safety Regulation 2025-26 were approved by committee on 6 June 2025. The report provides information about the delivery of the two Service Plans for Quarter 4. Appendices 1 and 2 contain detailed information about the delivery of Service Plans for Food Law Enforcement and Health and Safety Regulation 2025-26.

Recommendations

- 1.1. The Committee is asked to review progress and provide any comments considered appropriate on the delivery of the two Service Plans for Q4.

Key Corporate Plan Priorities

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The work covered by the two Service Plans largely sits under Priority 3 – Doing our core work well - Delivering good quality, high value-for-money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations.

Report Author

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The report provides information about the delivery of the Service Plans for Food Law Enforcement and Health and Safety Regulation for Quarter 4 2025-26.

2. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

2.1 The overall aim of the Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement is to ensure that food placed or intended to be placed on the market for human consumption which is produced, stored, distributed, handled or purchased within Huntingdonshire is without risk to public health or the safety of the consumer. This is fulfilling our statutory duty under the Food Safety Act 1990 and the Food Hygiene and Safety (England) Regulations 2013. There are several key objectives which contribute to the delivery of the overall aim.

- The delivery of a programme of inspections and other interventions in accordance with the FSA's Code of Practice
- To respond to complaints and requests for service in accordance with any internal service standards
- To respond to any FSA Food Alerts for Action (FAFA) subject to available resources

2.2 The overall aim of the Service Plan for Health and Safety Regulation is to work with businesses and employees to protect all people, including members of the public, from unsafe working conditions by fulfilling the council's statutory role as a 'Health and Safety Enforcing Authority'.

3. PROGRESS AGAINST APPROVED SERVICE PLANS

3.1 Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement

3.1.1 The main focus of this service plan is the planned routine inspections of food businesses. All food businesses are risk rated category A to E with A being the highest risk. The risk rating mechanism is provided in the Food Law Code of Practice (England) and considers the consumers at risk; the level of current compliance with statutory obligations and any relevant industry codes of recommended practice in relation to the hygiene and structure of the premises; and the confidence in management/control processes in place. For example, a care home or nursery may be Category A due to their consumers being in a vulnerable group and inspected every six months. Most restaurants, pubs and catering businesses are Category C or D and will be inspected every 18 or 24 months. Category E are the lowest risk premises and will include small retailers selling pre-packed food and home caterers making cakes only.

The table below shows the categorisation of food businesses in Huntingdonshire on 31 March 2025, with the data from 31 March 2024 as a comparison:

Category	Number of Premises 31 March 2024	Number of Premises 31 March 2025
A	3	1
B	79	70

C	340	362
D	460	474
E	645	745
Unrated	58	115

3.1.2 Appendix 1 shows activity in a number of areas against the level of activity predicted.

3.1.3 In Quarter 4 there were 221 food hygiene inspections carried out which was consistent with quarters 1, 2 and 3 and means the level of predicted activity continues to be exceeded.

3.1.4 In Quarter 4 there were 80 new food business registrations received, this shows the continuing flux of food businesses. A new business registration can occur when an existing business changes hands and a new food business operator takes over or an entirely new business starts up.

3.1.5 In Quarter 4 there were 17 compliance checks undertaken, these are revisits to check compliance where the food hygiene inspection has uncovered issues that need attention. This is slightly higher than the level of activity expected.

3.1.6 Fifteen rescore requests were received in Quarter 4 which is higher than previous quarters. We are finding if businesses receive a low food hygiene rating (e.g. 0,1 or 2) they are becoming increasingly quick to request a rescore to improve their rating. This is largely driven by the minimum rating required to stay on online food platforms such as well as the businesses reputation.

3.1.7 Appendix 1 also shows that requests for export certificates continue to be slightly higher than anticipated based on previous years data.

3.1.8 Officers have continued to take part in UK Health Security Agency's sampling study, the topics for Quarter 4 were the same as previous quarters - Ready To Eat Dried Fruit Nuts and Seeds; and Root Vegetables. Businesses were advised of sample results. The number of samples taken in 2025/26 was less than anticipated due and the year overall is rated red due to the laboratory stopping accepting routine samples for a significant period of Q1 and Q2 for operational reasons.

3.2 Service Plan for Health and Safety Regulation

3.2.1 The majority of health and safety work in Quarter 4 was reactive, there were 16 accidents reported of which 4 investigations commenced. The selection of accidents for investigation is founded upon the risk-based criteria in Local Authority Circular (LAC) 22/13.

3.2.1 There were 59 other service requests responded to and the majority of these were licensing consultations where a new premises, street trading or pavement licence had been applied for by a business in the district. Examples of other services requests were a concern about the use of unlicensed botox products, mould in a hotel room and a complaint about infection control in a barbers.

3.2.2 There were 22 skin piercing registration applications made for premises and practitioners within the district. New legislation covering the licensing of non-surgical cosmetic procedures is still awaited.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED & NOT RECOMMENDED

4.1 N/A

5. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

5.1 N/A

6. POST-DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 N/A – the recommendation is not a decision.

7. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

7.1 Council Key Priorities and Performance

7.1.1 The work covered by the two Service Plans largely sits under Priority 3 – Doing our core work well - Delivering good quality, high value-for-money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations. The report demonstrates if this priority is being met by showing how the two service plans are being delivered.

7.2 Financial Implications

7.2.1 N/A – this report does not have a decision with financial implications.

7.3 Policy Implications

7.3.1 N/A

7.4 Legal & Constitutional Implications

7.4.1 N/A

7.5 Community Impact

7.5.1 N/A

7.6 Environment & Climate Change Implications

7.6.1 N/A

7.7 Equality & Diversity Implications

7.7.1 N/A

7.8 Implications on Resources

7.8.1 N/A

7.9 Health & Wellbeing Implications

7.9.1 N/A – the recommendation is not a decision.

7.10 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implications

7.10.1 N/A – the recommendation is not a decision.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 The failure to monitor the delivery of the approved Service Plans could invite criticism from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in their capacities as the national regulators.

8.2 Members have asked to be kept informed about the delivery of the approved Service Plans in order that they can comment on the way in which the service is provided as well as the available resources.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS– LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

9.1 The approved Service Plans for 2025/26 can be found here: [Agenda for Licensing and Protection Committee on Thursday, 5 June 2025, 2:00 pm - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/Agenda-for-Licensing-and-Protection-Committee-on-Thursday-5-June-2025-2-00-pm)