

DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

FOOD SERVICE PLAN

2023-2024

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Abbreviations:

ABC – Achieving Business Compliance

AES- Alternative Enforcement Strategy

CIEH- Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

ECP - Environmental and Community Protection

EHC – Export Health Certificate

EHO – Environmental Health Officer

ETSF – External Temporary Storage Facilities

FAFA – Food Alert for Action

FTE – Full time equivalent

FSA – Food Standards Agency

FHRS - Food Hygiene Rating System

LGA – Local Government Association.

PA – Primary Authority

POAO - Products of Animal Origin

PPI - Paid Per Inspection

FNOAO - Food not of Animal Origin

UKHSA - UK Health Security Agency

COVID 19 Local Authority Recovery Plan statement

On the 31st March 2023 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) made a decision to end the COVID 19 Local Authority Recovery plan that all LA's in England had been following as the country emerged from the COVID 19 Pandemic.

Up until this point all Local Authorities (LA's) were following the FSA COVID 19 Local Authority recovery plan in order to deliver official controls and related activities in food establishments to ensure that businesses were complying with the requirements of food law and to enforce those requirements where necessary. This guidance covered the period from 1 July 2021 to 2023/24.

This was agreed by Senior Management and elected Members at Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2023 as at this time the FSA road map to recovery was expected to cover the period 2023/2024. The recovery plan can be accessed below and a review of the milestones is contained within Annex 4 within this document.



Due to the cessation of the recovery plan all LA's are now expected to follow new objectives set by the FSA.

From 1 April 2023, local authorities' objectives are 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). This is in line with the expectation in the Recovery Plan that establishments should revert to Code frequencies once subject to an intervention as part of the Plan.
- Work towards realigning with the provisions set out in the Code from 1 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. Please note, services should be resourced to ensure they can meet the requirements of the Code.

It is important to mention that Dacorum's Food Safety Team were able to move at a faster pace with the recovery plan and were ahead when it comes to some of the milestones set e.g. the number of D rated premises inspected, compared to a number of other LA's. This has put Dacorum in stronger position at the beginning of April 2023 to realign all food interventions due in food premises. It is however important to note that we still have a backlog of physical inspections of lower risk premises (D Rated Premises). There are also a large number of E –rated premises that are mentioned later on in this service plan See section 4.1 below.

1. Introduction

This Service Plan is dedicated to the food law enforcement functions undertaken by the Environmental Health Service, Environmental and Community Protection (ECP), Neighbourhood Operations Directorate. The Service Plan includes details of works carried out under food safety legislation.

The scope of the service plan covers specific areas relating to:

- Food safety and hygiene enforcement
- Infectious disease investigations

The Food Service Plan expresses the Council's commitment to the development of the food service and the requirements set by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) who monitors and audits local authorities' activities on food law enforcement. The Service Plan helps to ensure that the national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally.

The FSA 'Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls By Local Authorities', provides service planning guidance and provides the format for this document. This is to enable the FSA to assess our delivery of the Service Plan and to enable comparison with (and benchmarking against) other local authorities.

The FSA, in the Framework Agreement, requires that the Food Service Plan be suitably approved, whether this is by Senior Officers or by members. Dacorum Borough Council service plan is approved by the senior leadership team

1.1 Current and Emerging issues

Public Health Agenda

The food team is looking into ways in which they can feed into the public health agenda.

The food team will assist UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) previously known as Public Health England with any emerging/ existing infectious diseases if required e.g. Monkey Pox now known as MPox.

The Food team are currently assisting with all types of contact tracing, workplace outbreaks and infectious disease complaints as and when they arise.

The Environmental Health Team Manager regularly attends the Health Protection Board that comprises of all district and boroughs within Hertfordshire and Hertfordshire County Council public health officers. This valuable forum is used to discuss current and emerging infectious disease issues and to decide what consistent and proactive action will be undertaken within Hertfordshire to protect public health. If a new Covid 19 variant becomes a variant of concern (VAC) this is the forum in which it would be discussed.

Cost of living crisis

The food team have found that food hygiene standards in Dacorum have dropped during the pandemic with a decrease in the number of premises being awarded a food hygiene rating of 5. The cost of living crisis may further impact on the food hygiene standards found within food premises due to the increase in food and energy costs e.g. turning off refrigeration units when the business is not operational. Any repair work required might take longer to do e.g. fixing broken boiler to ensure the premises has a hot water supply and businesses may try to save money by keeping food longer than they should e.g. instead of discarding food with a use by date they continue to use it, potentially increasing the risk to consumers. In line with our enforcement policy we will always take a graduated and balanced approach when dealing with non-compliance but will always take the appropriate enforcement action where it is warranted. Protecting public health will always be the overarching priority.

National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (nFHRS)



The nFHRS operates in partnership with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) providing consumers with an easy to understand single scheme across the UK. After a programmed food inspection a food premises are given a rating (from zero to five) based on the findings of the inspection. The scheme is operated in strict compliance with the nFHRS Brand Standard and monitored to ensure a consistent approach amongst officers. The scope of the FHRs in England extends to establishments supplying food direct to consumers. This includes restaurants, cafes, takeaways, sandwich shops and other places where people eat food prepared outside of the home, as well as food retailers. There are some food businesses within Dacorum that fall outside of the scope of the scheme because they do not sell direct to the final consumer e.g. manufacturers who do not have a retail element and businesses that are not recognised as a food business e.g. childminders.

If the food business thinks their rating following an inspection is wrong or unfair they can appeal in writing or complete an appeal form and send it to the Food and Health and Safety Officer within 21 days of being notified of their rating.

The food business also has the “right to reply” which is different from an appeal. It gives the food business an opportunity to explain if there were unusual circumstances at the time of inspection or what steps they have taken since to rectify contraventions. This information is published along with the rating on the Food Standards Agency website.

The food business also has an opportunity to request a rescore re-visit but only if the improvements to hygiene have been made following an inspection. The council currently charge a fee £204 for this,

payable after the request has been accepted and carried out within 3 months of the request/payment.

Of the 1361 registered food premises in Dacorum 1088 are currently rated and the remaining 271 are either awaiting inspection, fall outside the scope of the scheme (sensitive, excluded or exempt) or are not yet operating.

Intervention Planning and Implementation

Whilst primary food hygiene inspections will continue to form an important part of our regulatory function, the Food Standards Agency has enabled a more holistic, targeted approach, by using a range of interventions. These include, Partial Audits, verification visits, Sampling, etc. In broadly compliant premises rated 3 or above we alternate between full and partial inspections and this helps us focus our resources where they are needed most.

FSA Achieving Business Compliance (ABC) Programme

The Achieving Business Compliance (ABC) programme was set up in January 2020 to modernise how food businesses are regulated by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and local authorities. This programme is an evolution of The Regulating Our Future Change Programme. Work on this programme slowed due to the pandemic but started to move forward again in September 2021.

The programme has three key work streams:

- 1) Enterprise level regulatory approaches - designing new regulatory models for a set of large businesses that are compliant with regulation and influential in the food chain
- 2) Assurance of online food sales - exploring what type of regulatory approaches will be most suitable for different online food businesses
- 3) Targeted and proportionate regulation for food businesses – making sure local authorities can target their resources to the businesses that need it most including the modernisation of the food hygiene delivery model.

This is a long-term, agile programme of work, expected to take around five years for the FSA to deliver their objectives. The main work stream that will impact on Dacorum's food team is the proposed modernisation of the food hygiene delivery model.

Food hygiene delivery model project:

“The food hygiene delivery model, particularly the intervention rating scheme that drives planned interventions, has remained, for the most part, fit for purpose in terms of protecting public health. However, it has created challenges over recent years as the pace of change in the food industry has increased against the backdrop of reducing local authority resources. This highlights the need to modernise the system to ensure that it is sustainable, drives continuous improvements in business compliance, provides the assurance needed to facilitate trade and export and maintains public health now and in the future.” (FSA, June 2022)

The FSA are currently working closely with local authorities to undertake work to modernise the current food hygiene delivery model in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and a local authority/

FSA working group has been established. The FSA anticipate the modernised model being agreed in 2023/24 with full implementation in 2024/25.

To achieve this, the FSA have developed, in collaboration with LAs on the LA/FSA Working Group, a set of proposed principles to evaluate the success of the modernised model.

There are five proposed principles:

- Effective – protects public health and provides the assurance needed to maintain consumer confidence, reduce regulatory burdens on compliant and/or low-risk businesses, and facilitate trade and export now and in the future.
- Risk-based – provides a proportionate, risk-based and consistent approach for dealing with new and existing food businesses that is compliant with existing legislation and makes effective use of data, information, and intelligence.
- Adaptable – adapts to different types of food businesses and takes account of current, emerging, and future risks (local, regional, national and international) in the food system, changing business models and innovation in the food industry.
- Sustainable – facilitates resilience and capability within local authorities by providing flexibility, enabling and encouraging them to target their resources effectively to ensure every intervention adds value and drives continuous improvements in business compliance.
- Considered – takes account of the food hygiene rating scheme so that it can continue to operate successfully and maintain consumer confidence; and, where appropriate, the food standards delivery model, other ABC programme work streams, and the animal feed intervention rating scheme (where applicable).

In relation to sustainability, the modernisation of the food hygiene delivery model is not about reducing the level of resource required by local authorities, rather it is looking to make the most effective use of resources by ensuring that official controls are focused on the highest risk and/or non-compliant businesses.

At the time of writing of this service plan the FSA have outlined the proposed 'Headline' policy for developing the modernised model which includes:

➤ **A targeted intervention rating scheme:**

- focus official controls on the highest risk and/or non-compliant establishments
- reduce regulatory burdens on those that are compliant and/or low risk, including recognition of sustained compliance
- require follow-up interventions to be undertaken, where appropriate, until compliance is achieved
- reflect current and future risk management practices and business models
- align, where appropriate, to the review of the food standards model (recently piloted in England and Northern Ireland)
- clarify the role of food safety culture
- clarify the aspects of allergens to be considered within the food hygiene intervention rating scheme and the division of responsibility for allergens in two-tier local authority areas

- **More proportionate approach** – risk-based approach to timescales for initial official controls of new establishments and due interventions of existing ones.
- **Increased flexibility** – as to:
 - the methods/techniques of official controls, including use of remote assessment
 - who can undertake official controls and other official activities
- **Effective use of data** – enable intelligence (including industry assurance data, where appropriate) to be used when risk rating establishments
- **Appropriate performance management** – framework for monitoring delivery of official controls which recognises all activities used to achieve compliance

Work to date:

- The proposed ‘headline’ policy and principles were endorsed by the FSA in September 2022
- Developed and engaged on ‘initial’ policy proposals with local authorities (January 2023)
- The FSA engaged with local authorities on the proposals via a series of face-to face events in April and May 2023. This was an opportunity for local authority colleagues to discuss the proposals, ask questions and provide the FSA with their feedback and insights
- The FSA launched an informal consultation on developing a modernised food hygiene delivery model in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in April 2023. The deadline to respond was the 30th June 2023. Dacorum responded jointly with the Herts and Beds Food Safety Working Group.

Next steps:

- Following the informal consultation the FSA will review and refine the proposed developments for the modernised model.
- A six month pilot will commence in early 2024 with chosen Local Authorities
- The FSA will seek to engage on proposals for wilder primary production establishments in early 2024.
- A formal consultation is anticipated to take place in late 2024.

Until the implementation of the new Food Hygiene delivery model the food safety team will follow the FSA objectives set out above. Local authorities will continue to report to the FSA on performance management. Please see section 4.10 below.

Health Certificates

We have had a steady decline in the number of requests for health certificates in 22/2023 largely due to the relocation of the most frequent requesting food premises. In total 4 certificates were issued. Businesses wishing to export their food items to destinations outside of the EU may require certification, from this department. This is not a statutory duty, however to assist our customers in

running their businesses we do provide this service for a fee. The certification process has also been streamlined making it easier for our customers to request and pay for a certificate and reducing the administrative burden on the food team.

Exported/ Imported Food

Exported Products of Animal Origin (POAO) and High Risk Food not of Animal Origin (FNOAO) will require Export Health Certificate (EHC) and businesses may request these from the Local Authority. As mentioned above DBC intend to assist our customers in running their businesses and will operate a fee paying service. All members of the food team have completed OCQ (CO) – FCCOr Food Competent Certification Officer revalidation training in May 2022 which does not expire until May 2025

EHO's from DBC have attended Imported Food refresher training to ensure officers are competent to undertake the inlands checks and take the appropriate action if the situation arises.

DBC have ensured that food & drink businesses can access the most up to date guidance on our websites relating to importing and exporting food products.

The impact of leaving the EU on the food team's workload and resources has been less than expected. This may be due to the UK government's decision to delay checks on food imports from the EU at the time of writing this service plan until late 2023.

The proposed Boarder Target Operation Model (BTOM) introduces a new risk based approach for controlling imported high-risk food and feed products into GB, based on the inherent risk posed by the commodity to animal health, public health, food safety and biosecurity, alongside any specific risk from the country/region of origin. At the time of writing it is still not clear what impact the BTOM will have on inland local authorities that do not have a Boarder Control Post (BCP).

On-line Food Ordering Platforms

This year a number of the popular on-line food ordering services, including Just Eat and Deliveroo, announced that they would be introducing a minimum FHRs rating in order to be listed on their platforms. This is a positive and welcome move to raise standards in the industry.

Although a welcome move, the announcement has placed additional pressures and demands on the Service, including:

- Requests from food business operators to undertake inspections outside the planned inspection programme. We have seen an 50% increase in the request for rescore revisits in 2022/23 compared to 2021/2022
- Direct pressure on officers during an inspection to award higher food hygiene ratings.
- Increase in the number of appeals in relation to FHRs ratings. This has not been demonstrated in 2022/2023 with food businesses opting to request a rescore revisit instead once a conversation has been had with the inspecting officer or Lead Food officer and the reasons for the low ratings explained in full

2. Service Aims and Objectives

2.1 Aims and objectives

- Protection of public health by ensuring the safety of food (including water) used for human consumption
- Preventing the occurrence and spread of infectious disease of environmental origin
- Providing accurate and consistent advice and information to businesses and the public
- Working with food businesses to ensure legal compliance
- Dacorum Borough Council's ECP Department are committed to providing 'a balanced Service in relation to food safety. Our service is driven by the four following criteria and the Regulators Code:
 - ❖ Demand driven – complaints/requests, food alerts for action, food poisoning, etc.
 - ❖ Inspection driven – programmed food visits, sampling programmes
 - ❖ Education driven – home authority principle, primary authority principle, public awareness campaigns, FHRS, FSA initiatives etc.
 - ❖ Intelligence driven – Food Alerts For Action, port health notifications, sampling

2.2 Links to corporate objectives and plans

Delivering for Dacorum Corporate Vision

The corporate vision 2020-2025 includes key areas plus an additional internal area.

- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment.
- Building strong and vibrant communities
- Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
- Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those in most need.
- Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
- Climate and Ecological Emergency

The Food Safety service plays a fundamental role in ensuring that the residents of Dacorum have an informed choice of where they can safely purchase food and drink. The Food Service also assist's food businesses by providing advice on a range of food safety matters that can aid economic growth and prosperity and encourage people to visit Dacorum

3. Background

3.1 Local Authority profile

The Borough of Dacorum is in West Hertfordshire. It is composed of the main towns of Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring, plus a number of large and small villages. Dacorum in its present form was created in 1974, following a review of local government in England and Wales.

Dacorum has a population of 155,500 living in 59,938 homes. Based on current trends the population is forecast to increase by 15.96% by 2041. One of the most significant features is the growth of the population in the over 65 age group.

Dacorum has much to offer in terms of business location. Hemel Hempstead is only twenty-five miles (40km) outside central London. It sits very closely to motorways, and via the motorway network is well placed for all parts of the country and Channel Tunnel and Channel ports for surface travel to Europe.

The area has always enjoyed diversity of employment and is not dependent upon one employer or industry. This has been a big factor in fending off the worst effects of economic downturn, maintaining relatively low levels of unemployment. The labour pool covers a wide range of skills. Overall levels of deprivation are low (Dacorum is ranked 261 out of 326 English districts). Dacorum is one of the healthiest areas in the country and levels of crime are moderate by national standards and the lowest in the County. (<https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/community-living/statistics-about-dacorum>)

3.2 Organisational structure

The Council currently implements a Leader with Cabinet style of decision making. (Annex 1 provides a link to DBC's organisational structure.)

The Food Safety function sits within Neighbourhood Operations. It operates under the direction of the Team Leader (Environmental Health) Environmental and Community Protection who reports to the Head of Regulatory Services, who in turn reports to Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Operations). (Annex 2 shows the 2022 ECP structure.)

The Manager (Environmental Health) and Lead Environmental Health Officer (Food, Health & Safety) share the role of lead food officer. This role will be supported by the Head of Regulatory Services. Specialist services for the food functions are provided by external organisations, namely UKHSA as the food examiner and Kent Scientific Services as the public analyst, who has been nominated by Hertfordshire County Council Trading Standards Department.

Formal microbiological analysis of food samples and faecal samples is carried out by UKHSA, whilst Kent Scientific Services carry out physical and chemical analysis.

The Council's Scheme of Delegation filters down the powers to officers to undertake their functions. This is reviewed on a regular basis and Food Officers must meet the competencies set out in Annex 3 relevant to their role at Dacorum and meet all CPD (continuing professional development)

requirements set by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) which all members of the food team are a member of.

3.3 Scope of the food service

Protection of public health by ensuring the safety of food (including water) used for human consumption by:

- Undertaking a program of hygiene inspections / interventions of food premises,
- Issuing approvals in wholesale businesses supplying food of animal origin.
- Responding to service requests from food business operators and others
- Undertaking a program of microbiological food sampling
- Enforcing the imported food control legislation
- Implementing an alternative enforcement strategy
- Promoting food safety
- Promoting 'Safer Food, Better Business' as a recommended food safety management system
- Responding to food alerts and product withdrawals, as appropriate
- Continue to issue ratings and stickers under the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (nFHRS), enabling members of the public to make an informed choice as to those businesses they choose to purchase food from, and to encourage food business operators to improve and maintain hygiene standards
- Working with businesses to ensure compliance with relevant food safety legislation.
- Take appropriate enforcement action in accordance with the council's Enforcement Policy and Food Law Code of Practice and Guidance

Preventing the occurrence and spread of infectious disease of environmental origin by:

- Investigating and controlling cases and outbreaks of infectious disease and providing information and advice

In addition, the Service undertakes the following related areas of work:

- Carrying out health and safety inspections
- Carrying out proactive interventions in Health and Safety
- Investigating accidents

- Undertakes skin piercing premises and operator inspections on behalf of the licensing department who are responsible for registering all premises/ operators that carry out this function.
- Providing responses to Land Charge Searches and planning applications for new or altered premises
- Responding to Health and Safety consultations for licence applications and variations
- Responding to Freedom of Information requests.
- Responding to Planning Consultations with regard to contaminated land, air quality, noise, food and health and safety.
- Supporting other Teams within the department as and when required.
- Attending meetings of the Herts and Beds Food Liaison Meetings, Herts and Beds Sampling Sub- Group, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, UKHSA Liaison Meetings, the Dacorum Safety Advisory Group, EU Exit group, and provide Environmental Health Technical Advice to the Local Resilience Forum.

3.4 Demands on the food service

Services are delivered from The Forum, Hemel Hempstead between 8.45 am and 5.15 PM on Mondays to Thursdays and between 8.45 am and 4.45 PM on Fridays. Inspections of businesses trading outside normal working hours are routinely undertaken. There is a duty emergency officer appointed, who can contact the Food Team outside of normal working hours should an emergency arise.

Specific Demands:

The Food Safety Service has specific demands placed upon it, as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| • Primary Producers | 3 |
| • Food Manufacturers and packers | 33 |
| • Importers and exporters | 9 |
| • Distributors/ Transporters | 24 |
| • Retailers | 227 |
| • Restaurants and Caterers | 1065 |

- Within Dacorum there is an ethnic minority of 13.2% (Office for the National Statistics, 2021 Census). The number and types of food establishments reflect this cultural diversity. Officers have been specifically trained on equalities and diversity.
- The Food Standards Agency (FSA) encourages local authorities to identify activities in imported food control. There are no airports, seaports nor external temporary storage facilities (ETSF) within Dacorum. 3 importers have been identified in the district from premises registration forms and local knowledge.

Distribution of FHRS ratings for Dacorum by establishment type.

Number of establishments in each rating																
FHRS rating	Restaur ant/ Cafe/ Canteen	Hotel/ Guest House	Small Retailer	Super market/ Hyper market	Caring Premise s	Restaura nts and Caterers - Other	Distrib utors/ Transpo rters	Pub/ Club	Retailer - Other	Take- Away	School/ College	Mobile Food Unit	Manufa cturers and Packers	Importe r/ Exporte rs	Primar y Produ cers	Total
5 - Very good	165	6	71	27	82	178	4	78	20	64	82	44	10	1	1	833
4 - Good	49	1	17	2	14	14		26	4	23	8	4	5		1	168
3 - Generally satisfactory	17		11		1	4		10		16		2	1			62
2 - Improvement required	5							2		2						9
1 - Major improvement required	3		5					1		6					1	16
0 - Urgent improvement required																0
Total rated establishments	239	7	104	29	97	196	4	117	24	111	90	50	16	1	3	1088

3.5 Enforcement policy

Dacorum Borough Council has a documented Environmental Health Enforcement Policy that was approved by cabinet in 2021. The policy follows the regulators code and has regard to the Crown Prosecution guidelines.

The policy is made available whenever enforcement action is taken and whenever a member of the public requests a copy.

4. Service Delivery

4.1 Interventions at Food Establishments

The Council is required to follow the Food Law Code of Practice (England) (FLCOP) in risk rating premises and setting targets for the inspection program. Within the overall objective of achieving 95% of planned interventions (categories A-D) each year. Low risk premises (category E) are subject to an Alternative Enforcement Strategy and will be re-assessed not less than once in any 3 year period. As mentioned above the food team are was working towards the FSA Covid 19 Recovery Plan up until the 31st of March 2023. The milestones that the LA were required to meet are set out in this separate plan. However where resources have allowed the food team have been operating at a faster pace and have reached some of the deadlines more quickly allowing us to carry out some inspections sooner than anticipated. The food team have been able to realign with the FLCOP in terms of inspection frequency for a majority of A-D rated premises and are almost back to business as usual heading into 2023/2024. This is reflected in the table below.

The Food Law Code of Practice defines different types of interventions that local authorities may use in the future and the circumstances in which they may be applied. A range of interventions will be introduced as part of a plan to improve compliance with food law, whilst maximising use of resources. The selection of interventions will be based on risk assessment.

Table: Food Planned Inspections 2022/2023 – These figures include outstanding inspections from 2021/2022

	Interventions Due	Interventions Outstanding on 31/3/2023	Percentage Achieved
Premise Rating - A	3	0	100%
Premise Rating - B	31	0	100%
Premise Rating - C	102	1	99%
Premise Rating - D	339	19	94%
Premise Rating - E	306	171	44%
Totals	779	*191	

**. In comparison to other Local Authorities within Hertfordshire, Dacorum's food team did exceptionally well to inspect as many food businesses as it did during this period considering we were working to the deadlines in Covid 19 Local Authority Plan. The food team managed to carry out a number of interventions relating to E rated premises even though the expectations in the recovery plan stated no interventions will be required unless intelligence suggests that risks have increased*

In addition to the programmed interventions, new businesses and those trading occasionally in Dacorum are inspected during the year. In 2022/2023 the council received 189 food premises registration application forms. These were predominantly new businesses, the minority were existing businesses updating their food business details. Nationally there has been an unprecedented number of new food business registrations throughout the pandemic and this continued during 2022/2023. These were reviewed on a risk basis and the food team focused on inspecting high risk premises first.

Table: Number of Food Premises Registrations (FPR) applications received between April 2018 -March 2023

	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
FPR's received	129	131	205	213	189

At the beginning of April 2023 there were 46 unrated premises. The food team have worked hard in 2022/2023 catching up with the backlog of unrated food premises. A majority of the premises that have yet to be inspected going into 2023/2024 are low risk or where not currently operating when contacted despite giving a specific opening date on the food premises registration form. A number of the businesses contacted to arrange an inspection had never started trading or had ceased trading at that point. The use of the Paid Per Inspection (PPI) contractors have also been fundamental in inspecting these premises.

The move back to business as usual in 2023/2024 and ongoing use of PPI contractor's will hopefully enable the council to continue clear the remaining back log in ,but as quickly as we inspect the premises we receive new food premises application forms. At the time of writing this report we have

received 59 new FPR applications since the 1/4/2023. In the meantime the food premises registration acknowledgement letter sent to food businesses provides lots of information and advice about operating a food business safely and what is required to comply with the law. This is still a key area for prioritisation for the food team.

There are a number of premises that fall outside of the inspection programme where the risk is considered to be so low, as that there is effectively no risk, such as vending machines selling sweets in hardware premises or a florist selling chocolate. We also keep a record of premises where the application of FSA Guidance on the application of EU food hygiene law (adopted in to national law) relating to community and charity food provision (Paragraphs 2,3 & 3A are applicable). These types of premises are recorded as businesses that fall outside of the food planned inspection programme. We do not carry out any interventions within these businesses unless we receive a complaint.

During the pandemic we were successful in securing funding from Hertfordshire County Council to backfill roles in the food team that had been re-deployed to assist with the Covid 19 response. This funding continued in 2022/2023 during the recovering phase and has enabled the council to continue to engage a contractor on a on a Paid per inspection (PPI) basis. They have played an important role in helping the food team follow the FSA Covid 19 Local Authority recovery plan during 2022/2023.

The main focus throughout 2022/2023 has been the recovery phase and following the guidance in the FSA Covid 19 Local Authority recovery plan as we move back to business as usual. We have followed the FSA guidance and undertaken approval visits due or new, rescore revisits and followed up on complaints. We have taken the relevant enforcement action where deemed necessary and continued to serve notices, undertake closures and conduct interviews under caution.

In addition to the food complaints and food premises registration application forms received throughout 2022/2023 the food team has also received a steady number of general food service requests, including nFHRS queries, new business advice, trading standard complaints, requests for Health Certificates (not due to EU exit as countries are outside the EU), etc.

As well as implementing the recovery plan, the food team have been operating a reactive service in order to protect public health and responding to complaints as and when they arise. This has resulted in a number of notices being served, voluntary closures and PACE interviews.

Table: Enforcement Action Taken 2022/2023

Voluntary closure	2
Seizure, detention & surrender of food	2
Improvement notices	7
Written warnings	492
Simple Cautions	0
Prosecutions concluded	0

Compliance revisits are undertaken in less than broadly compliant businesses where enforcement action would be warranted if compliance is not achieved in line with the Food Law Code of Practice (England) and the nFHRS. If further non-compliance is identified formal action following DBC's EH enforcement policy is taken.

The emphasis of the service is to protect public health by enabling businesses to understand their legal obligations and measures which they must take to ensure food safety, rather than the blind pursuit of inspection targets. Advice and assistance are provided, particularly during programmed inspections / interventions, coaching opportunities offered to help businesses to control food safety hazards.

During 2022/2023 we have adopted a risk based approach in line with the Food Law Code of Practice (England) when making decisions to focus our limited resources when delivering the food service in conjunction with assisting with the council's Covid 19 response and delivering the Covid 19 LA recovery plan ahead of schedule.

4.2 Food complaints

The purpose of investigating complaints regarding food sold within the borough, (whether the food originated within the UK or elsewhere) is to:

- Provide a service to the public
- Resolve problems which pose a risk to public health
- Provide information to the food industry in order to raise and maintain standards
- Offer advice and guidance, where appropriate, in food hygiene matters to food businesses and consumers
- Carry out appropriate enforcement action, where required
- Prevent future complaints
- Identify whether there is a wider national issue

It is difficult to predict the level of complaints for 2023/2024, but there has been a slight increase as we have moved back to business as usual as people are now visiting food businesses at pre-pandemic levels.

Overall, more customers seem to be contacting food companies directly regarding complaints about food, as a means of being compensated for their inconvenience.

The Council's procedure on food complaints is to investigate where there is a genuine public health implication or where an offence may have been committed and the complainant is willing to give evidence in court. Customers are referred back to the retailer if compensation only is being sought. The Council has procedures for dealing with food complaints. Depending on the nature, anonymous

complaints are not usually investigated but the complaint is entered on the premises database and considered on the next scheduled inspection.

Other complaints relating to hygiene at premises are risk rated by the receiving officer and an investigation visit may be made if deemed necessary.

(Many requests for general advice and information are also received from the public, local organisations, businesses and new food operations, see 4.4 below.)

Table: Food Safety requests received

	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Food Hygiene Complaint	3	10	10	11	7	32
Hygiene of premises complaint	124	81	60	46	53	56

4.3 Home Authority and Primary Authority Principles

Dacorum Borough Council recognises the importance of constructive partnerships with food businesses that can deliver reliable advice and coordinated and consistent enforcement.

The Council's policy is to support:

- The Local Government Association (LGA) Home Authority Principle
- The Office of Product Safety and Standards, Primary Authority Principle

All food officers follow the Primary Authority (PA) principle.

Before undertaking a planned routine food hygiene inspection, members of the Food Team will check the online Primary Authority Register to see if the business has a primary authority partnership.

The officer will check if there is a specific inspection plan or assured guidance that they must take note of. The officers will feedback as required to both the PA and the business once the inspection has concluded

If enforcement action is warranted the officer will ensure they notify the PA before taking action within the designated time period or retrospectively in the event of an imminent risk to health.

4.4 Advice to business

The advisory and training elements of the service are viewed as key to the Service's effectiveness (see section 3).

The main objectives are to:

- provide advice and information to food business operators and food handlers
- recommend practical, good food hygiene practices, in accordance with any Industry Guides or codes of practice where appropriate
- promote continuous improvements in food hygiene standards

Most contact with businesses arise during inspections, where the opportunity is taken to provide advice and information and to promote training opportunities. Small and medium size enterprises (and the voluntary sector when information is requested) are targeted, as expert advice is often not readily available to them. Close liaison is maintained with Council service providers, such as Adventure Playgrounds.

The council have introduced a fee for Food Hygiene advisory visit request (preopening/ new businesses/ pre inspection) with a report of £94 per hour.

The Food Safety page of the Council’s website is reviewed annually. This is currently being updated.

The council continues to promote Safer Food Better Business to businesses that require support in producing a documented food safety management system. New premises are also identified at the planning stage, and when the applicant may be targeted with food safety information. The council have recently introduced a 3 Hours Safer Food Better Business Coaching session for a fee of £138 (plus 50% fee per additional person from the same business).

An Environmental Health Officer regularly attends Dacorum Safety Advisory Group meetings, where the organisers of events due to be held in Dacorum are invited to attend to obtain relevant food safety guidance. Proactive visits are also made to events to carry out inspections of food businesses.

208 general food requests were received in 2022/2023, many from existing businesses or from people considering setting up new businesses. (The press, local publications and planning application lists are also used as methods to contact new and potential businesses.)

525 total Food Service requests (Including General Food Safety Requests, Hygiene of Premises Complaints, Food Alerts, Food Hygiene Rating System Requests, Food registration applications, Health Certificate Requests, rescore revisits etc.) were received in 2022/2023.

4.5 Food sampling

The Council’s policy is to undertake sampling where required by statute and where appropriate, to participate in sampling programme organised by the UKHSA and the Herts and Beds Food Liaison Group. Samples are also collected in outbreak situations or where there is an allegation of food poisoning. Follow up action is taken as a result of unsatisfactory results.

Table: Food samples taken

Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Total Samples	24	6	0	0	0	7	18

The Herts and Beds Food Liaison Group, is represented by the Manager (Environmental Health) or the Lead Officer (Food, Health and Safety) or an allocated deputy from Dacorum Borough Council.

There is also a sampling sub group that has a representative from Dacorum Borough Council.

All local authorities have a budgetary provision with UKHSA for sampling.

2022/2023

As mentioned previously the focus for 2022/2023 has been the implementation of the FSA Covid 19 Local Authority recovery plan and meeting the deadlines within this plan. However we have participated in National Study 74: Hygiene in Takeaway Sandwich and Salad bars. Members of the food team visited a number of food premises within Dacorum and took a number of food samples and swabs. Of the 18 samples submitted only two came back unsatisfactory and officers followed up with those businesses to improve hygiene standards around cleaning and disinfection.

We have, always ensured that we are able to undertake formal sampling as part of an outbreak/ complaint investigation.

2023/2024

The food team will continue to participate in National Sampling Studies as and when the sampling protocols are released by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA).

4.6 Control and investigation of food related infectious disease

The service will investigate food related infectious disease notifications in accordance with procedures agreed with UKHSA. Investigations of outbreaks will be undertaken in accordance with the Joint Plan for the Control of Communicable Diseases in Hertfordshire. When viral outbreaks are identified general guidance is offered to control the spread of the disease.

Notifications of persons in high-risk groups such as food handlers, those working in health care, children under 5 years and older children and adults who may find it difficult to implement good standards of personal hygiene, will be actioned as quickly as possible, together with more serious infections such as E.coli O157:H7, Typhoid, Botulism and cryptosporidium.

Reported infectious diseases

Table: Year 2022/2023

Salmonella	0
Campylobacter	0
Cryptosporidium	0
Viral Hepatitis	1
Typhoid	1
E.coli 0157	2
Listeria Monocytes	1
ID/FP Enquiries	2

Shigella Flexneri	1
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UKHSA stopped referring individual routine infectious disease cases to local authorities during this time period due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The small number of cases above were UKHSA had a particular concern. This has remained the case through 2022/2023.

The resource implications of such incidents in the forthcoming year are difficult to predict particularly as at the moment we are still only notified of cases that UKHSA has a particular concern about. In the last pre-pandemic operational year we received the following number:

Table: Year 2019/2020

Salmonella	23
Campylobacter	75
Cryptosporidium	14
ID/FP Enquiries	5

4.7 Food safety incidents

The Food Law Code of Practice (England) details steps that must be taken when a Food Alert (FA) is issued or a food safety incident occurs within the borough.

Procedures are in place to ensure that the Council complies with the Code of Practice. These include:

- Ensuring all members of the food team are members of the FSA Smarter Communications platform and receive the Food Alerts by email.
- That the secure ECP mailbox is monitored daily for any FA received which is then forwarded to the duty officer to action.
- Maintaining emergency planning arrangements to respond to out-of-hours emergencies.
- Determining action to be taken in response to a food alert
- Notification of the relevant Central Government department when required if an incident occurs within Dacorum
- Invoking the Joint Outbreak Control Plan where an incident involves communicable disease

Table: Food Alert for Action requests

Date	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
No of Food Alerts For Action	1	2	3	1	1	1

In June 2010 the Food Alert system was changed. This resulted in a decline in the numbers as the Food Alerts For Information became Product Recall Notices instead and do not need to be recorded for audit by the FSA. The Food Alerts for Action continue to be recorded in the same way.

4.8 Liaison with other organisations

The Council has made various arrangements to ensure that enforcement action taken within the Borough is consistent with that of neighbouring local authorities.

It is an active participant in:

- The Herts and Beds, Food Liaison Group (and Sampling Working Group)
- Inter-Authority Audits organised by the Food Liaison Group
- The Dacorum Safety Advisory Group

Liaison with other bodies includes:

- FSA
- Office of Product Safety and Standards
- LGA
- Hertfordshire County Council Trading Standards
- Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
- Ofsted (child care and nurseries)
- UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)
- Community Action Dacorum
- Affinity and Thames Water Companies
- Hertfordshire Interpreting and Translation Service

Arrangements are in place for liaison with Planning and Building Control where Environmental Health input is required. Partner and cross departmental working also takes place with other Council services e.g. Licensing, Legal and Corporate services, Housing, Land Charges, Environmental Services, Resident Services, Strategic Housing, Tenants and Leaseholders.

4.9 Food safety promotion

Officers keep up to date with all of the FSA Food Safety Campaigns and make sure that they are promoted/ advertised on the Councils Social Media Platforms by working closely with the council's communications team.

4.10 Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS)

The annual Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System return 2022/2023 (due May 2023) provides a summary of local authority activity in relation to food law enforcement at food establishments. The completion of the LAEMS return is the mechanism in which the LA feedback to the FSA on annual performance.

In 2022/2023 a bespoke Food Hygiene – Local authority end of year return was devised by the FSA to take in to account Covid-19's impact on Local Authorities Food delivery service. This continued in 2022/2023. The purpose of the return was to provide information on resources and on the delivery of food controls in 2022/23, including the ability of local authorities to meet the minimum

expectations of the Covid 19 LA Recovery Plan, or as evidence that the local authority has been able to move at a faster pace. The information provided would also be used to inform the FSA's ongoing review of the Recovery Roadmap and guidance.

Due to the ABC programme and the development of the new food hygiene delivery model and the implementation of the Covid 19 LA Recovery plan that covers the period of the 1st July 2021 to 2023/24 the bespoke end year return was intended to remain in place until the new food hygiene delivery model is implemented.

The revocation of the Covid 19 LA Recovery Plan at the end of March 2023 has resulted in the FSA reviewing how the LA monitoring data will be collected in the interim period while the food hygiene delivery model is developed and implemented. Going forward the following arrangements have been proposed:

- Twice-yearly data collection (mid and end of year returns), the first return being at the end of Quarter 2, going live on 1 October 2023,
- A consistent data / question requirement obtained using the current online platform that was used during the Recovery period (Survey Monkey).
- It is the FSA's aim to circulate the data and questions for the surveys as soon as practicable if the proposal receives final sign off from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and in plenty of time for LAs to prepare for the first survey in October. These have now been received.

5. Resources

5.1 Financial allocation

Financial provision has been made for 4 full time equivalent (FTE) posts (excluding the Head of Regulatory Services and Manager (Environmental Health), within the Food, Health and Safety Team.

Officers also undertake specific duties not directly related to the activities considered in this plan (see 3.3 above) and contribute to the work of the department as a whole. Based on this 3.75 FTE professional posts are allocated to undertake food hygiene controls for 2023/2024.

Approximately 5% of the Head of Regulatory Services work time is directly attributed to food safety work. The Environmental Health Manager spends approximately 30% of their time on Food Safety Work.

The Department has a fixed budget of £5,000 for legal action costs.

5.2 Staffing allocation

Approximately 4 FTE work will work on food safety and infectious disease matters by the end of 2023/24 as well as undertake work mentioned in 3.3 above.

The service comprises of:

Post	Authorisations
Head of Regulatory Services Emma Walker	Inspections Hygiene improvement Notices Emergency Prohibition Notices Remedial Action Notices Food Seizure/ Detention
Manager (Environmental Health) Sarah Stefano	Hygiene improvement Notices Emergency Prohibition Notices Remedial Action Notices Inspections Food Seizure/ Detention
Lead Officer Food, Health and Safety Rebecca Connolly	Hygiene improvement Notices Emergency Prohibition Notices Remedial Action Notices Inspections Food Seizure/ Detention
Environmental Health Officer Kal Ifegwu	Hygiene improvement Notices Inspections Food Seizure/ Detention Emergency Prohibition Notices Remedial Action Notices
Environmental Health Officer Jolade Isaac	Hygiene improvement Notices Emergency Prohibition Notices Remedial Action Notices Inspections Food Seizure/ Detention
Environmental Health Officer Mark Dewey	Hygiene improvement Notices Emergency Prohibition Notices Remedial Action Notices Inspections Food Seizure/ Detention

Activity	Projected Resource Required to Deliver the Service
Inspections	1.23
Approved Establishments	0.02
Sampling	stc*
Revisits	stc*
Investigations	0.25
Formal Action	0.2
Training	stc*
Liaison	0.04
Business Advice/ Liaison	0.2
Management	0.4
Total	stc*

stc* / subject to change due to significant changes in scale of service delivery

5.3 Staff development

Training needs and competence are assessed on appointment and then at annual personal development appraisals. Managers and Lead Officers are responsible for carrying out appraisals and assessing competence.

Training needs identified during the appraisals are then prioritised and planned to ensure that officers have the relevant competencies for their authorisations as specified in the Food Law Code of Practice (2021) Chapter 3. The link to the document outlining these can be found in Annex 3. Training could be provided in-house or externally. The Herts and Beds Heads of Service Food Group arrange courses throughout the year in accordance with generally identified needs. This usually enables more cost-effective training provision. Typical external providers include the FSA, CIEH and ABC Food Law Ltd.

Officers are expected to lead learning circles for their colleagues following training courses, to ensure that relevant information is cascaded.

Individual training records are maintained for each officer and kept on DORIS.

Members of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health may attend relevant branch meetings.

In addition to staff appraisals, the Manager (Environmental Health) and Lead Officer reviews a proportion of all case sheets and inspection records and aims to accompany officers on visits on an annual basis for quality monitoring purposes. A report pro-forma is completed for each accompanied visit, the contents of which are fed back at a debrief meeting. The paperwork for a food inspection that receives a food hygiene rating of less than 3 is passed to another officer for peer review auditing. This ensures consistency between officers.

Food Team meetings are held approximately every two months (more often if required) but officers have regular catch-ups with the Lead Officer/ Environmental Health Manager

6. Quality Assessment

Quarterly/ Monthly performance reviews are based on the Intervention Strategy. The Head of Regulatory Services will then report to overview and scrutiny committee, on a quarterly/monthly basis for KPI and significant service updates.

The Food Safety Service has developed a series of procedures to ensure the delivery of quality services. These are revised routinely to ensure compliance with current legislation, codes of practice and other guidance. Customer feedback may also lead to procedures being revised. All documents are held centrally as computerised 'controlled documents'; they are available in read only format and are available for all officers.

7. Review against Service Plan

7.1 Review against Service Plan

Key performance indicators are reported on a quarterly/ monthly basis during the quarterly review. These reviews will identify where the Council is at variance with the Service Plan and, where

appropriate the reasons for variance. This has not been relevant during the pandemic as we have followed the FSA guidance at all times and are now implementing the Covid 19 LA recovery plan that contains its own milestones and deadlines that we are aiming to meet until 2023/24. The Lead Officer currently reports performance figures based on this plan to the Environmental Health Manager who in turn reports to the Head of Regulatory Services.

The revocation of the Covid 19 Local Authority Recovery Plan at the end of March 2023 has seen a move back to these KPI's during 2023/2024. Although the food team have worked ahead of the recovery plan deadlines there will be a period of catch up during 2023/2024. The focus will always be on the A-C rated higher risk premises.

7.2 Identification of any variation from the service plan

During 2022/2023 we have followed and implemented the Covid 19 Local Authority Recovery Plan and this is the main reason for the variation away from the usual food service plan.

Serious accident investigations also deviate time away from the Food Service plan. At the end of the financial year 2022/2023 a serious accident occurred in LA enforced premises within in Dacorum. It is anticipated this will take up the investigating officer's time while this active investigation is underway.

7.3 Areas of improvement

- Staff development

Staff development is paramount; we have and continue to invest heavily in staff development. This includes supporting the council's student Environmental Health Officer's to achieve EHORB registration or chartered status depending on what route they have decided to take that is achievable and not constrained by CIEH timescales. There are currently one officer undertaking training to become qualified Environmental Health Officers in the Environmental Health Team. Predicted completion date is August 2025.

- Aims post Covid 19 Local Authority Recovery Plan.

As mentioned above the focus for the Food team in 2023/2024 is to ensure we meet the FSA's new aims and objectives outlined in the statement above.

Annex 1 – DBC Senior Leadership Structure Chart



Structure Chart

Annex 2. ECP Structure Chart June 2022



ECP Structure Chart

Annex 3. FLCOP (England) Competency Framework

<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice#food-law-code-of-practice>



Competency Framework 2021

Appendix 4.

Dacorum Food Safety Recovery Plan 2022/2023 review

Full details of the recovery plan can be found here:



Dacorum Food Safety Recovery Plan 22.23

The recovery plan was revoked by the FSA on the 31/3/2023. The table below outlines the milestones that Dacorum's food safety team was working towards up until this date and the progress made on each activity/ category.

Activity/Category	Timeline	Expectation	Progress Made at the End of March 2023
Conditional and full approval visits	Ongoing	In accordance with relevant legislative requirements	All approvals visits made during 2022/223.

Activity/Category	Timeline	Expectation	Progress Made at the End of March 2023
<p>Proactive surveillance to obtain an accurate picture of the local business landscape and to identify</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - open/closed/recently re-opened/new businesses - change of operation, activities or FBO 	Ongoing	<p>Consideration of registration information and intelligence on the food business establishment identified through surveillance</p> <p>Undertake appropriate onsite interventions where there are concerns around public health/consumer protection</p>	Basic surveillance conducted as part of LAEMS return and food complaints received during 2022/2023
New food business establishments where consideration of registration information/intelligence indicates low risk	Ongoing	Initial visits should be prioritised and undertaken in accordance with the Codes of Practice requirements	Fed into the inspection programme. All inspections assigned to officers and initial risk assessment conducted. From April 2022 until March 2023 143 new businesses have been inspected. PPI contractors are assisting with clearing the backlog of new businesses. Those that remain outstanding have been assessed as low risk.
Management of food incidents and hazards (including outbreaks of foodborne illness)	Ongoing	In accordance with the Food Law Codes of Practice	Business as usual
Investigation and management of complaints	Ongoing	In accordance with the Food Law Codes of Practice	Business as usual
Enforcement action in case of non-compliance	Ongoing	In accordance with the Food Law Codes of Practice and the local authority's enforcement policy	Business as usual

Activity/Category	Timeline	Expectation	Progress Made at the End of March 2023
FHRS requested revisits	Ongoing	Within three months of request if a charge is made and within six months of no charge but with use of remote assessment in place of onsite visit in limited circumstances on a trial basis (with evaluation in place)	Business as usual. We have seen a 50% increase in requests in 2022/2023.
Sampling	Ongoing	In line with local authority sampling programme or as required in the context of assessing food business compliance	The food team to participated in STUDY 74: Hygiene in Takeaway Sandwich and Salad bars. This sampling was undertaken in October 2022.
Category A for hygiene	Over the period to end of March 2022	All establishments should have received an onsite intervention and thereafter be back in the system for interventions in accordance with the Codes of Practice	Target met February 2022. At the start of April 2022 all category A rated premises were back in the routine programme of interventions in accordance with the frequencies set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (the Code).
Category B for hygiene	Over the period to end of June 2022	All establishments should have received an onsite intervention and thereafter be back in the system for interventions in accordance with the Codes of Practice	Dacorum inspected all B rated premises except one that was temporarily closed (Retirement Village Café) by the end of March 2022 ahead of the recovery plan. At the start of April 2022 all Category B rated premises were back in the routine programme of interventions in accordance with the frequencies set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (the Code).

Activity/Category	Timeline	Expectation	Progress Made at the End of March 2023
<p>Category C for hygiene – less than broadly compliant (FHRS 0, 1 or 2)</p>	<p>Over the period to end September 2022</p>	<p>All establishments should have received an onsite intervention and thereafter be back in the system for interventions in accordance with the Codes of Practice</p>	<p>Target met before deadline. Dacorum inspected all Category C -less than broadly compliant food businesses by April 2022.</p> <p>At the beginning of April 2022 there was 1 outstanding compliant C that required an inspection. This was a cricket club that had a rating of 4.</p> <p>All other category C rated premises were back in the routine programme of interventions in accordance with the frequencies set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (the Code).</p>
<p>Category D for hygiene – less than broadly compliant (FHRS 0, 1 or 2)</p>	<p>Over the period to the end of December 2022</p>	<p>All establishments should have received an onsite intervention and thereafter be back in the system for interventions in accordance with the Codes of Practice</p>	<p>This target was met in November 2022 ahead of schedule.</p>

Activity/Category	Timeline	Expectation	Progress Made at the End of March 2023
Category C for hygiene – broadly complaint or better (FHRS 3, 4 or 5)	Over the period to the end of March 2023	<p>For establishments with two consecutive food hygiene ratings of 5 (or equivalent stands if outside scope of FHRS) one intervention may be missed and then the establishment put back in the system for interventions in accordance with the Codes of Practice</p> <p>For other establishments – those with hygiene ratings of 3 or 4 (or equivalent of outside the scope of FHRS - should have received an onsite intervention and thereafter be back in the system for interventions in accordance with the Codes of Practice</p>	<p>At the beginning of April 2022 there was 1 outstanding compliant C that required an inspection. This was a cricket club that had a rating of 4.</p> <p>All other category C rated premises were back in the routine programme of interventions in accordance with the frequencies set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (the Code).</p>
Category D for hygiene – broadly complaint or better (FHRS 3, 4 or 5)	Ongoing	No interventions will be required unless intelligence suggests that risks have increased	<p>The food team worked ahead of the recovery plan deadlines and at the end of March 2023 we had nearly got back on track with all our category D rated premises.</p> <p>At the beginning of April 2023 we had 19 D rated outstanding. These were all compliant businesses with a rating of 5.</p>

Activity/Category	Timeline	Expectation	Progress Made at the End of March 2023
Category E for hygiene	Ongoing	No interventions will be required unless intelligence suggests that risks have increased	<p>Dacorum will follow up any complaints received regarding premises that are E- rated if received.</p> <p>Recovery funding has enabled a support officer to start working through our AES premises and this continued in 2022/2023.</p> <p>During this period 171 out of 306 E-rated premises received a food hygiene intervention in the form of a food safety questionnaire.</p> <p>There is an expectation from the FSA that now the Recovery plan has ended that all E rated premises will be back in the routine programme of interventions in accordance with the frequencies set out in the Food Law Code of Practice (the Code) by the end of March 2024. The Food team will try to meet this but will always prioritise A-D rated premises where the risk to the consumer in terms of food safety is higher as per the FSA objectives set.</p>