

Food Standards Agency in Scotland

Report on the Core Audit of Local Authority Official Controls in relation to Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs in Food Business Establishments and the Application of the Food Hygiene Information Scheme

**Midlothian Council
22 - 24 July 2014**

2.0 Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Authority had developed and implemented a detailed Food Safety Service Plan for 2014-15 and had a Food Safety Enforcement Service Plan Review for 2013-2014, both of which satisfy the Service Planning Guidance in the Framework Agreement. The Environmental Health Service Plan had been approved by Midlothian Council in June 2014.
- 2.2 The Authority had developed a series of documented policies and operational procedures relating to their food law enforcement responsibilities. These documents were available to all Officers in electronic format on a central directory and those evaluated at audit contained up to date references to legislation and official guidance.
- 2.3 Authorisation documents were generally satisfactory, only missing any reference to the Official Feed and Food Regulations. The documents were being used by Officers across the food service. Officers were subject to regular reviews of performance which was referenced to their level of authorisation; however this had recently fallen behind and work plans had yet to be drafted for this year.
- 2.4 Individual Officer training needs were identified as part of their annual performance development plan. Training records contained evidence that each Officer had completed a minimum 10 hours relevant training in the last year.
- 2.5 The procedures and documentation provided for inspections were being appropriately and consistently completed. From the files examined, it was evident that Officers were clear on the Authority's procedure for conducting inspections and adhered to the Authority's Enforcement Policy.
- 2.6 File checks of five general food hygiene premises confirmed that in all cases the Authority were completing detailed inspections, including the assessment of cross contamination risks and HACCP based food safety management systems. Food business operators were provided with clearly worded reports and letters confirming the main findings from inspections. The information retained within the premises files provided sufficient evidence to support the basis for Officers' enforcement decisions and the Food Hygiene Information Scheme level given.
- 2.7 It was evident from audit checks that Officers were taking a graduated approach to enforcement and actively worked with businesses to achieve compliance. The information reviewed relating to a series of Notices identified that the enforcement decisions reached were generally appropriate to the contraventions identified.
- 2.8 Discussion and review of internal monitoring procedures and practices indicated that the Authority was monitoring many aspects of food law enforcement work. Records of internal monitoring activities were retained on file.