

For circulation to Licensing and Protection Committee – July 2026

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

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

## Monitoring Report on the delivery of the Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement

The Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement 2026-27 was approved by the Licensing and Protection Committee on [18 June 2026](#). The committee requested to be kept informed of progress against the service plan by receiving quarterly monitoring reports via email. These reports will also be published alongside the Service Plan on the council's website.

This report provides information about the delivery of the Service Plan for Quarter 1, 2026-27.

### Background

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

### Progress Against the Approved Plan

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 2026, with the data from 31 March 2024 and 31 March 2025 as a comparison:

**Table 1** Categorisation of food businesses in Huntingdonshire

| Category | No. of Premises<br>31 March 2024 | No. of Premises<br>31 March 2025 | No. of Premises<br>31 March 2026 |
|----------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| A        | 3                                | 1                                | 4                                |
| B        | 79                               | 70                               | 61                               |
| C        | 340                              | 362                              | 342                              |
| D        | 460                              | 474                              | 516                              |
| E        | 645                              | 745                              | 569                              |
| Unrated  | 58                               | 115                              | 62                               |

The table below shows activity in a number of areas against the level of activity predicted.

**Table 2** Food Activity 2026-2027

| Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Predicted<br>Activity<br>2026-2027 | Recorded<br>Activity<br>Q1 2026-<br>27     | Total<br>Activity<br>2026-27               | RAG<br>Status |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Programmed food hygiene inspections<br><br>A breakdown will be reported for:<br>1) Programmed inspections<br>2) Initial inspection (new business or new FBO)<br>3) Aborted/no access or closed premises inspections (aim to minimise) | 721                                | Total: 215<br><br>1) 121<br>2) 83<br>3) 11 | Total: 215<br><br>1) 121<br>2) 83<br>3) 11 | Green         |
| Alternative Enforcement Strategy (AES) (e.g. cake makers and childminders)                                                                                                                                                            | 82                                 | 9                                          | 9                                          | Amber         |
| Revisits to check compliance following a food hygiene inspection                                                                                                                                                                      | 30                                 | 11                                         | 11                                         | Green         |
| Mentoring / business support visits                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 10                                 | 2                                          | 2                                          | Green         |
| Sampling visits                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 18                                 | 5                                          | 5                                          | Green         |
| Food, water and environmental samples taken                                                                                                                                                                                           | 50                                 | 10                                         | 10                                         | Amber         |
| Prosecutions and cautions                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 2                                  | 0                                          | 0                                          | Green         |

|                                                                                                 |     |    |    |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|----|-------|
| Formal action (service of notices, closures)                                                    | 5   | 2  | 2  | Green |
| Complaints and service requests about food and about/from food businesses                       | 250 | 61 | 61 | Green |
| Requests for export certificates                                                                | 70  | 15 | 15 | Green |
| FHRS re-score requests (low is good)                                                            | 30  | 9  | 9  | Green |
| Infectious disease control - notifications of food-borne/food poisoning illnesses (low is good) | 30  | 6  | 6  | Green |
| FSA food alerts for action                                                                      | 10  | 2  | 2  | Green |

In Quarter 1 there were 215 food hygiene inspections carried out which shows the level of predicted activity is due to be met and potentially exceed again.

In Quarter 1 there were 82 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.

The Alternative Enforcement Strategy relates to sending out questionnaires to our lowest risk business to complete instead of a physical food hygiene inspection. Out of the 19 sent out in Quarter 1 only 9 have been returned which is why the level of activity is showing as amber. Follow ups are being made to businesses who have not returned their questionnaires.

In Quarter 1 there were 11 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.

Officers have continued to take part in UK Health Security Agency's sampling programme. The Quarter 1 study focused on 'Pre-cooked and point of sale Rice, Noodles and Pasta'. This study will continue until the end of March 2027. In addition, a new study on 'Ready to Eat Raw fish and Shellfish' commenced in June 2026. Officers will begin participating in this study during forthcoming sampling visits. Businesses were advised of sample results. Slightly fewer samples have been collected than predicted in this Quarter due to the nature of the product being sampled and type of premises where it can be obtained.

There were two formal actions undertaken in Quarter 1, these were food hygiene improvement notices, both served on the same business. Compliance with the notices is now being monitored and further action could be undertaken if compliance is not achieved.

Table 2 also shows the numbers of requests for export certificates dropped slightly in Quarter 1 based on previous years data.

Nine rescore requests were received in Quarter 1 which is above the predicted activity, however, slightly lower than previous quarters in 2025/2026. 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 business' reputation.

Officers dealt with two Food Alerts for Action (FAFAs) during the period. The first related to food safety concerns affecting all frozen products marketed under the Inarah's Frozen Food, Inarah's Fine Food and New York Crispy brands. The second concerned cooked diced chicken imported from Brazil due to the potential presence of *Listeria monocytogenes*, requiring investigations into local distribution chains, verification of product withdrawals, and assessment of any supply to vulnerable settings such as care homes, schools, nurseries and hospitals.