



MINUTES OF LONDON FOOD CO-ORDINATING GROUP MEETING

Wednesday January 2008

Walbrook Wharf Offices – Corporation of London

Present			
Peter Scott	(PS)	LB Havering	Chair / For NE Sector
Duncan Arthur	(DA)	Eurofins Ltd	Public Analyst
Susan Surman-Lee	(SSL)	HPA	
Tay Potier	(TP)	CIEH	London Region Policy Officer
Carol Zelenka	(CZ)	LB Greenwich	For SE Sector
Chris Carabine	(CJC)	LB Barnet	For NW Sector
Mark Stanbury	(MS)	LB Barnet	LFCG Approvals Group Joint Coordinator
Helga Jackson	(HJ)	RB Kingston Upon Thames	For SW Sector
Peter Kemp	(PK)		Minutes Taker

1. Apologies for absence / Introductions

Apologies were received from David Lock (LACORS), Les Bailey (LACORS), Chris Day (Kings College), Jackie Jewett (FSA). To note Karen Ryan has recently moved to a new local authority and her replacement as the regular representative for the SW Sector will be Brian Griffiths

2. Minutes of Meeting Tuesday November 2007 accuracy and matters arising

Action Points not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

Accuracy – Item 10 amended to read “He also believed that the meeting revealed that the FSA appeared to have a lot of information we can share”

Page 6 Action Point – PK in discussion with CIEH re CRM project. Updates to the London Region website in hand

Page 8 Action Point – TP has recently had discussions with Keith Hill (ALEHM) concerning the funding of minute takers generally

Page 9 Action Point – Nigel Whiteley has amended the documentation relevant to the enlarged Approval Group

Page 9 Action Point – TP confirmed that an application to the Food Champion Award Scheme had been submitted by the LFCG and two other London Boroughs had also made submissions in their own names (LB's Islington and Camden)

Next stage in the process is the "Presentation" stage which should take place January / February

Page 13 Action Point – PS has arranged suitable dates for the 2008 meetings of the LFCG with James Smith (City of London) and these have been circulated. Meetings will be held at their Walbrook Wharf offices

With the corrections already made to the draft minutes and the additions and updates identified above, the Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record

3.HPA Update – (Susan Surman-Lee)

SSL reported on the progress of the project reviewing the operation of the HPA laboratory services which includes determining how the service can be best provided and transport issues. It is likely that the number of laboratories may be reduced from the 27 currently to 12 – 14. This will release funds that will be used to consolidate / improve the service, strengthen the relationship with the Public Analysts, plan for the future, and increase the use of molecular methods.

All "savings" from the re-organisation of the service will be "ring-fenced" and used to fund the improvements.

Other benefits will come from improving the service specification and standards of service delivery, increasing the number of collection points (particularly in South London) and improving the levels of expertise available. They are looking in great detail at how transport of samples can be improved and this could result in a regional laboratory being established for an area with additional laboratories also being created in areas where the transport links are particularly poor

A new seamless, common IT system is also being introduced

A letter to local authorities updating progress on the review and setting out the forward plan will be circulated within the next 2 weeks. SSL said the HPA would welcome feedback and comments on what is proposed

SSL said she believed that the changes to the HPA would result in a much better service over the next couple of years.

Turning now to staffing matters, SSL said that interviews were due to be held soon for the lead posts in the FWE laboratory. She also said that a number of senior staff working in the London laboratories were due to retire soon. Allan Johnson's contract may also be leaving as his contract is coming to an end. His appointment had worked very well and the post will continue to be funded.

It is currently being re-evaluated in accordance with the "agenda for change" grading process. SSL asked the opinion of the LFCG as to whether this should be a permanent post or a 2-year contract. She also asked if there were any professional environmental health CPD and / or competency issues associated with appointing another EHP

TP commented that an EHP who had not carried out any work relating to food inspections / enforcement would be required to undertake a number of hours of structured retraining to re-establish their competency to carry out duties in connection with food enforcement but the requirements were not particularly onerous

The post could be advertised with both options "2 year contract / option to become permanent". TP said she would be happy to assist in the appointment process

SSL said that there were a number of other staff movements taking place within the HPA

Looking at current food issues including imported food, SSL said that the snack seed survey had produced a number of samples of sesame seeds that were found to be positive for the presence of Salmonella. Based on these results she thought it would be useful to look at sesame seed products

Flavoured drinks aimed at children being imported from non-EU countries were also an area of concern.

Antibiotic resistant bacteria isolated from samples taken of imported herbs had also been detected. There was a particular danger if these got into animal feeds

Further information on these topics to be circulated to the LFCG

CZ asked if there was any further information concerning the outbreaks of Salmonellosis thought to be associated with German eggs. SSL said that the evidence that these were the cause was anecdotal as no positive samples of eggs had yet been identified. There were also connections with eggs sourced from Poland. The movement of eggs within the EU was a problem as the original country of origin was not always clear. She thought another London wide survey would be useful. PS thought that unless we had the evidence that German eggs were the cause of an outbreak it was difficult to justify an investigation.

However a sampling protocol could be produced quickly and this survey could be incorporated within this year's programme. A LACORS / HPA egg mixes survey was already in the programme for this year.

Sectors to produce a list of suggested sampling topics for possible inclusion within the LACORS / LFCG programme. Decision to be made at the next meeting of the LFCG as to which should be included

All to Note:

See also further information from SSL under AOB

4. Public Analyst Update (Duncan Arthur)

DA spoke and said that in relation to the FSA imported foods sampling bid there had been a problem with the protocols which had been received late but the right numbers of samples had been submitted with the exception of baby and infant foods.

The very few samples of infant foods that had been received will be intensively tested. DA requested LA's have another look for further samples. It was believed that some products of Turkish and Ugandan origin were thought to be on sale in the UK

Via Sectors, LA's to email DA if any further products found on sale

FSA is currently inviting sampling bids for 2008 which need to be submitted by February. Sampling programme can be selected from a list of twelve categories. FSA funding works out at about £35 / sample

DA was aware that the NW Sector was keen on putting their own bid together but a decision needs to be made as to whether joint or separate bids should be prepared. The benefit of a joint bid is that the numbers that have to be prepared is reduced.

DA said that he also worked with West of England LA's and they had put in a bid covering all categories listed then allocated one or two categories to contributing LA's. PS asked how much information would be needed to adopt the approach taken by the West of England.

DA to contact London LA's to seek their intentions as to whether they will be looking to submit their own bids or participate in a joint bid

Eurofins has recently circulated a sampling matrix to London LA's listing possible sampling projects. London LA's to respond indicating any that they would be interested in carrying out. Any associated training needs should also be identified

The review of the PA service continues

5. Any other sampling issues

The meeting discussed the issues raised at previous meetings of the LFCG relating to raw fish and rice used in the preparation of sushi. LACORS had been asked for further guidance but PS said that David Lock had replied that he was not entirely clear as to the exact queries that required answering.

HJ said the first revolved around the requirement, subject a number of listed exemptions, to freeze raw fish used in the preparation of sushi as required under the provisions of 853/2004. MS said he had had some recent dealing with the FSA Scotland and had been shown a form specifically designed to be used by food business operators to confirm that the raw fish they were using in sushi had been pre frozen. The requirements of 853/2004 cross over and apply to premises subject to regulations under 852/2004 where raw fish is being served.

MS said that there was an endemic problem in Japan from parasitic infection linked to the consumption of raw fish.

The meeting then discussed if there should be an exemption from the requirement when it related to sushi. The current exemptions under the Regulations were very limited in number. CZ reported that she thought that Westminster City Council were about to take a case against a sushi producer who after lengthy negotiations was still refusing to freeze the raw fish he was using.

MS said the second issue related to the temperature control of the rice used in sushi dishes which is often stored at room temperatures for excessive period of time. The addition of vinegar to the rice during preparation it is claimed act as a controlling factor which inhibits the development of toxins. In Australia this technique has been accepted but only on the basis that the fbo carries out pH testing on site.

HJ added that working with Eurofins, her authority, RB Kingston-upon-Thames had conducted some work in this area with some success. They had investigated the time it takes for toxins to be produced in the rice if it is infected.

The meeting thought that the all authorities finding problems relating to sushi production needed to act together and LACORS should be requested to seek further guidance from the FSA. The question was asked if it was possible to determine if fish had been frozen or not. DA said that he had never been asked to carry out such a test.

MS said that in connection with a sushi premises he was dealing with he has asked the fbo if he intends to identify on his menu which fish has undergone freezing and where this was carried out.

The contents and guidance in the letters from the FSA(NI) (Ref NIP/0464 dated January 2007 and ENF/NI/07/036 dated August 2007) attached to David Lock's email, referred to above was discussed.

Was the onus of proof that fish had been frozen on the enforcing authority or the fbo?

CZ thought it would be useful to circulate to all the London Boroughs the work that MS had already done relating to this issue. MS said we needed consensus as to how we were going to approach the enforcement of the current requirements as this would boost the confidence of any authority taking action.

HJ commented that she believed there was also a potential problem from the live fish often seen swimming around in tanks in restaurants which are chosen by the customer and then prepared from "live".

CJC asked if we were in danger of going over the top in the absence of any real evidence that there is a significant problem. How can we define it to a point where we could prosecute and how could we determine the extent of any possible problem?

It was suggested that the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine / Hospital for Tropical Diseases might be able to assist with information as to the extent of any problem with parasitic infections.

Is there a case for asking the FSA if they should make consumers aware that there may be a risk associated with the consumption of sushi. Any intended changes to 853/2004 to perhaps add to the list of exemptions would require the FSA to speak to the EU.

CJC said that he was considering undertaking a survey of premises producing / selling sushi in the LB of Barnet and he asked what he should be looking for.

SSL suggested he talk to the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine / Hospital for Tropical Diseases but the survey should include hygiene issues, pH of the rice, country of origin of the fish, the particular species of fish used might have some bearing and what can be done in relation to the parasites.

PS, in drawing the discussions on this item to a close, thought that it would be of help if a complete list of all the companies and restaurants producing or selling sushi was compiled. If the fish being used was imported from Japan it had probably undergone a freezing process before being exported.

PS to circulate email dated January 2008 and attached FSA (NI) letters received from DL and to discuss with him the matters raised during this meeting including comments that the type of fish used in the preparation of sushi needs to be identified as well

6. LACORS Update (David Lock)

No LACORS representative at the meeting, however David Lock had circulated to all members of the LFCG, an email which gave an update on various issues

- Report on food regulation and craft butchers / bakers
- Update of Food Legislation information on Council Websites
- Volunteers for a meeting to be held in London on January (FSA Incidents Branch – incident handling from a LA perspective)
- FSA Code Review (England)
- LACORS / HPA Sampling Programme (now announced) relevant to just Food Hygiene

PS to circulate email received from LACORS dated December 2007 which contains further information on the matters listed above

Sectors to ask if there are any volunteers to attend the Food Incident Management Meeting being held on January 2008 and PS to be notified of anybody who would be willing to attend.

**Alternatively Sector LA's to respond and notify PS asap of any particular issues that need to be raised which he can present if he is able to attend himself
All to Note**

7. Education Update (if any)

Deferred – No representative at the meeting

8. London Food Study Group Update (if any)

Deferred – No representative at the meeting. However PK reported that the LFSG had recently been active and two meetings had been held towards the end of 2007, the last being on December 2007 at which nominations to and elections for the officer posts of the group were held. Mario Aquilina had stood down as Chairman. Sandra Edmeade-Walters had been elected Chair and James Hoskin-Goode had been re-elected as a Joint Secretary with the other Joint Secretary post currently still vacant

All to Note

9. FSA Update

Deferred – No FSA representative at the meeting

10. FSA Code of Practice

PS asked did all the Sectors respond. The Sector reps said that a number of joint and individual responses from the sector LA's had been submitted and it was understood that all responses were being posted on the FSA website. PS said that he understood that the FSA had received the biggest number of responses ever in respect of the revised Code and Practice Guidance than to any other consultation documents.

The meeting generally thought that the FSA's timescale for implementation was unrealistic. TP understood that the changes would still be going ahead and she believed that training had already commenced on the use of the new monitoring software although other attendees thought that this had not yet begun. Comment was made that the software might already be out of date.

11. FSA Inter-Authority Audit

Raising the topic of inter authority audits PS said that Stuart Grice of the FSA was due to attend today's meeting and give a presentation of this process but he was not now available. PS has received information on how this will be carried out. There was little enthusiasm for repeating the last exercise.

PS to circulate by email the documents he has received from the FSA concerning Inter-Authority Audits for discussion at the next LFCG meeting

12. FSA Surveillance

PS spoke to a PowerPoint presentation prepared by Lynn Cree (EH Advisor – Health Protection Scotland (HPS)) detailing the FSA Surveillance System currently being trialled in Scotland.

This project was initially developed by Food Standards Agency Scotland in conjunction with HPS to provide a standardised data capture, storage, querying and reporting functionality for the microbiological and chemical analysis of food and animal feed samples. Its specific aim is to provide a robust Food Surveillance System (FSS) for the UK, which will permit key stakeholders to compare local data within a regional and national perspective.

The pilot is managed by a Project Board, which includes representatives from the Association of Public Analysts (APA), the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) and the Trading Standards Institute (TSI). This has been in place since December 2002 and has successfully steered the project through its pilot stages.

Since May 2002, the 4 Public Analyst laboratories and 4 National Health Service laboratories along with their partner councils have been contributing to the FSS within Scotland.

Some representatives at the meeting were already aware of this project but were concerned that its introduction would require the input of sampling results to be duplicated, firstly into the LA's own systems and then into the FSA's FSS, however DA said that the PA labs were responsible for entering the results.

Further roll-out of the FSS is planned over the next three years encompassing all PA laboratories and partner LA's.

The overall opinion of the meeting was that if this system can be utilised it would be a very useful tool. DA said that he is already involved with the FSS in connection with sampling work he does for Northern Ireland. He understood that a meeting was being arranged for the London Boroughs to fully explain how FSS worked and why they should buy into it.

The meeting thought they needed to confirm the FSA's roll-out timescale for the rest of the UK and it was believed that they were already in discussion with the software houses that supply computer application to LA's.

All to Note

PS to circulate the FSS PowerPoint presentation

PS to contact the FSA and invite them to address the LFCG on the FSS project

TP to speak with Jenny Morris at the CIEH and ask her if she has any contacts who might also be prepared to speak to the LFCG

CJC may be able to follow up a contact from Scotland whom he met at the "Best of the Best" Conference

13. Score on the Doors (Implementation Group Minutes)

Minutes from the SotD Implementation Group meeting held on December 2007 have been posted on the CIEH website

RB K & C have Member approval to include all premises inspected from February 2008 and will go "live" after that date, LB Croydon now also "live" on the web site and LB Sutton well on the way. LB Tower Hamlets still considering if it wants to be involved, LB of Southwark probably will not, LB's Bexley and Havering definitely not.

The "Your London" website will merge with London.gov.uk website mid 2008.

Sector representatives who want direct access to website statistics should contact Jim Bowes.

Next meeting of the Implementation Group will be January. A list of updates is being prepared. Some evidence of at least one recently prosecuted premises that have tried to manipulate the system by changing the name of the business and then requested a new inspection. Not all LA's have signed up to the consistency arrangements.

Query raised as to procedure to be adopted when scoring "premises within premises" eg, a staff canteen within for example, a supermarket where the staff canteen operation has been contracted out to a different FBO? It was generally agreed that the scores on the doors should be allocated to the registered name of the premises, which should be the fbo, ie the contractor.

Sectors to raise this issue with the Sector LA's if it has not already been discussed

Peer review and consistency monitoring process has commenced. This was discussed at the SotD Implementation Group meeting held on December. See CIEH website (London Region webpages) for Minutes of that meeting which give further details. Timetable was circulated with Implementation Group Minutes)

CJC mentioned issues relating to public awareness of the scheme and he suggested LA's should be encouraged to arrange local publicity for the scheme within their areas if this could be achieved within their budgets. He showed as an example, an article that had appeared in the Jewish Chronicle listing every premises within the LB Barnet awarded a star rating.

It was thought that the LFCG should be considering dates for joint publicity in light of the fact that the FSA was curtailing the evaluation period originally set for the SotD pilot from two years with a decision on a national scheme now likely to be taken in March this year, although the pilot will continue to run.

TP offered assistance from the CIEH press / media department. CJC thought this best organised through the Implementation Group

SSL asked what the position would be if for example, a premises awarded five stars is implicated in a serious food poisoning outbreak. The general opinion in answer to her question was that if the premises were closed down as a result it would subsequently be re-inspected and re-scored. SSL also thought it would be interesting to assess the impact on the turnover of the food business as a result of being awarded a star rating

All to Note

PS to circulate SotD Implementation Group Minutes of last meeting

Sector Reps to raise question of joint publicity at the next SotD Implementation Group meeting and to feedback to TP comments and observations made.

14. Approvals Group – Report on First Meeting

MS reported. First meeting of the enlarged Approvals Group with representatives from all four Sectors has recently been held on December 2007. This was well attended with 20 plus representatives. The Minutes of the meeting have been circulated to the LFCG. The meeting discussed the aims and objective of the new Group and how the authorities could best contribute to its work.

Ensuring a regular attendance by local authorities might depend on how well the Group can maintain interest of its officers. For example, the group would like to produce a range of answers to typical questions concerning approval, and these would be published. There were some concerns over the overall number of attendees but it was agreed that this would evolve over time.

The distribution of information, where this would be stored and the data protection implications were discussed. PS said that the Group needed to question if the minutes should be publicly available and how it would deal with confidentiality issues with respect to any named businesses.

It was thought that the minutes of meetings should be accessible via the CIEH and LACORS websites with precautions taken to ensure that no commercially sensitive information such as company names should be within any public domains.

The next meeting of the LFCG Approvals Group is being held tomorrow, January 2008.

PS and MS have already met to discuss who the Group is answerable to and how its relationship with the LFCG should work. The Group will meet bi-monthly and will set its own agenda. It is likely that other convened working groups may meet outside of the main Group meetings and the support of the LFCG will be looked for in respect of the issues the main and sub- groups present.

Matters of primary importance that require resolution at this time include, (1) Minute taking arrangements, and (2) Format of information and where this should appear.

All to Note

TP will draw up a list of all Minute Takers currently working for all Groups, Sectors etc via CIEH / ALEHM and forward this to MS

LFCG will agree work plan produced by the Approvals Group that will need to be supported by Sector LA's

Approval Group to decide what information from their meetings they wish to produce for circulation and to discuss access / security at their next meeting

Representative(s) from the Approvals Group to attend meetings of the LFCG as necessary and Approval Group to be a standing Agenda item

15. SFBB – Evaluation – Sustainability

PS said that this was standing agenda item. The Sectors need to agree the date for the further evaluation of the SFBB scheme and October 2008 had been suggested at the last LFCG meeting. Sectors needed to start thinking about exactly what they would contribute to the exercise and who was going to do it. Some form of steer would be helpful and it was suggested that the CIEH might be able to assist in this respect as they have statistical expertise in-house.

All to Note

Sector Co-ordinators to remind and alert all Sector LA's of the further SFBB Evaluation Project

PS to trace and circulate Minutes of the last SFBB Evaluation Project meeting (Report by Sharon Smith)

PS to contact FSA and ask them what action has been taken in response to the first evaluation exercise?

Agreed to aim for further Evaluation exercise to commence October 2008, subject to funding being available to meet the cost of any statistical analysis

PS to identify who within the FSA it dealing with sustainability issues relating to SFBB and to seek current information as to what work the FSA have done so far

16. Feedback from Sectors

- **NW** – CJC reported. Recent Sector meeting discussed SotD and poor publicity, amount of work involved in delivering the pilot, changes and other issues that need to be addressed in the current arrangements. New Approvals Group, a single representative from the Sector will attend unless a specific issue requires additional officers to also be there. Getting all sector authorities on board with respect to sampling projects and surveys. Discussed CoP / PG revisions and alternative intervention strategies
- **SE** – CZ said that at the last meeting the draft hygiene improvement notices were reviewed and these are nearly ready for circulation. Beryl Morgan had attended a Hampton Focus Group meeting. SotD, LB Southward not signed up yet and may not participate. Bexley already decided not to be part of the London pilot and LB of Greenwich has its own scheme. Only just over 50% of the LA's in the Sector are participating. "How to improve your Star Rating" leaflet produced by Westminster City Council to be circulated. Approvals Group, a Sector representative will attend with any other officers as and when. Sector response submitted in respect of the CoP and PG consultation. Sampling projects, topics to be included have been selected.
- **SW** – HJ said the Sector at their last meeting had discussed the CoP and PG revisions and had questioned what was an "intervention". Looking at SotD LB Sutton, may participate as they had a positive attitude to the pilot. Recent Imported Food guidance leaflet published by the FSA, authorities found it was directed towards enforcement authorities and not the commercial sector as first thought. Several sector authorities carrying out sampling projects had reported high levels of salmonella found in imported herbs, particularly those originating from Sri Lanka.

HJ also informed the meeting of a scrombotoxin incident involving tuna imported from Sri Lanka. There had been several cases of illness reported from various parts of the UK and the retailer had initiated a product recall and traced and contacted customers thought to have purchased the suspect tuna via its customer loyalty card database. The retailer failed however to provide any useful information to the investigating authorities. The Port Health Authority at Heathrow had been alerted. Problems in taking and transporting samples of the suspect tuna had been reported by LB's of Croydon and Lambeth in particular regarding the need to or not to freeze the samples before transporting them to the laboratory.

In commenting on this incident SSL advised that outbreak samples of this type should be transported direct to the lab and not sent initially to a Collaborating Centre. Toxin testing is carried out by the Reference Laboratory (Kathy Grant point of contact) and SSL recommends that the LA should talk to the HPA beforehand concerning the sampling technique to be used when dealing with a suspected outbreak and the HPA should be given prior warning if this type of sample is being submitted.

SSL to ask Kathy Grant to put together an advice note on the sampling of foods for toxin testing

Although samples will be tested by the Reference Lab, SSL asks that she should also be informed of any incident where samples have been submitted to them

SSL to contact the HPU regarding this particular outbreak

PS also suggested that LA might include a stand alone week long imported food project as part of its sampling commitment. He understood that LB Tower Hamlets were undertaking such a project and the NE sector was also considering carrying out a similar exercise

- **NE** – PS said that the Sector had submitted a response to the CoP and PG consultation and the NE Approvals Group had also commented. The imported foods sampled during the year had been reviewed. PS had written to the CIEH regarding the stream of letters received from them giving details of person that had been prohibited from operating a food business. He thought that this information was better stored on a central database, accessible via the CIEH website rather than sending out individual letters

The meeting discussed the loss of the OFT Central Register of Convictions and the need to establish some form of replacement possibly through LACORS

Agenda Item for next LFCG meeting – LACORS Central Register of Convictions

SotD, LB Havering are not participating neither is LB TH but all other LB's in the Sector are. Need input into the LFCG as to what is happening in relation to the Olympics and the impact these will have on LA's.

CZ to update LFCG after next meeting of the Olympics Implementation Group (Minutes of the last meeting are available)

Sector has looked at "Name and Shame" policies

Item for next LFCG Agenda – after Sectors have considered this option. Which LA's do / don't adopt this technique, used in connection with SotD?

Sector has looked at the sale of live land snails – are they food or not? It is understood that there have been previous discussion relating to this subject.

17. Any Other Business

- **HPA Appointments** – SSL informed the meeting that the news had just released that the new Chief Executive of the HPA will be Justin McCracken formally Deputy Chief Executive of the HSE.
- **HPA Sampling Projects** – Updating the meeting on current issues SSL said that there had been an increase in Salmonella's linked to the consumption of chocolate covered Brazil nuts.

A short sampling project of ready to eat shelled nuts will be carried out between the January and February. The protocol is being written and will cover both packaged and loose product. Examination will be for Salmonella and E.coli and this will be a quick “look-see” to evaluate any problems and decide if a wider ranging project is justified. SSL said she would welcome LA’s participation in the project

Snack Seeds sampling project is on-going with 220 samples taken to date. A lot of samples found to be positive for Salmonella. SE Sector taking samples for this project during January and SW Sector will also submit samples during February.

Ready to Eat Shellfish Survey. SW Sector will submit samples during January and NE Sector during February

Details of training courses being offered by the HPA during the year will be circulated next week.

- **LA Contact Details** – SSL asked that LA’s provide the HPA with an updated list of contacts including mobile telephone numbers with information forwarded to the HPA Administration Section.
- **Out of Hours Cover** – The meeting then discussed what cover LA’s had for dealing with potential outbreaks, food incidents and other urgent referrals that might occur outside normal works hours, at weekends, public holiday’s etc. Indications were that this was very variable.
Sectors to investigate and benchmark what level of cover / service LA’s operate during Out of Normal Work Hours, including Weekends and public Holidays and to report back.

Information to be gathered to be sufficient to answer the following questions:

Does the LA operate a paid or unpaid Stand-By / Out of Hours Service?

What Day’s / Hours does this operate? ie Weekdays, Weekends, Public Holiday’s

What services are covered by these arrangements?

Are these services able to deal with, for example potential food / ID outbreaks, food incidents, urgent unsatisfactory sampling results requiring immediate action, other matters?

Are the staff who operate the Out of Hours services qualified and competent to deal with these and authorised to take the appropriate level of enforcement action they might be required to employ, for example, the service of Emergency Prohibition Notices?

FSA Imported Food Grant Bid – CJC asked for confirmation as to the current position.

DA replied and said that a matrix covering the sampling topics had been produced and this was being circulated to Sectors with a request that they indicate if they would be submitting an individual bid or a combined bid with partner LA's in the Sector.

National Indicators for Local Authorities – Performance Indicator NI 184 – CJC asked what LACORS response had been in relation to the definition of what constituted a “Broadly Compliant” food premises? PS expressed some concerns over the terminology and thought that the PI would need to be calculated against some sort of deprivation index to take into account the influence of deprivation and high turnover of premises. He believed that once LA's could report say, 60% – 70% of their food premises were “broadly compliant” resources and funding would be vulnerable and could disappear. This matter needs to be kept under review

All to Note

LFCG Meetings Start Time – PS suggested that to help travelling difficulties for persons attending the meetings of the LFCG the start times of meetings be put back to 10.00 am in place of 9.30 am currently. This suggestion was agreed

All to Note

The Start Time for future meetings of the LFCG will be 10.00 am until otherwise advised. Finish time will remain unchanged at 1.30 pm

18. Dates of Next Meetings

The dates of the next meetings of the LFCG have been fixed for

09 January 08

04 March 08

29 April 08

25 June 08

19 August 08

15 October 08

All being held at the same venue, City of London Corporation's Walbrook Wharf offices

There being no other business the meeting of the LFCG closed at 13.15 hrs