

Report on	Consultation on The Food Hygiene Rating (Online Display) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023
Date of Meeting	15th September 2022
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
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Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To inform Members about the Food Standards Agency's Consultation on The Food Hygiene Rating (Online Display) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023 and seek any comments/amendments from Members on the enclosed Mid Ulster District Council draft response.
2.0	Background
2.1	The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme is a Food Standards Agency (FSA) and District Council partnership initiative. It is a key public health measure and an important commercial driver for businesses to achieve and maintain compliance with existing food hygiene law. The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme provides transparency to consumers about the hygiene standards in food outlets at the time of inspection by food safety officers from District Councils. This allows consumers to make informed choices about where they eat out or shop for food.
2.2	In October 2016, the Food Hygiene Rating Act (NI) 2016 (the Act) made operation of the Scheme in Northern Ireland statutory. Prior to this, and from 2011, the scheme had operated on a voluntary basis for both District Council and Food Business Operator (FBO) participation. Food Hygiene Ratings (FHR) are determined by District Council's following inspections carried out to verify food business compliance with food hygiene laws.
2.3	Food businesses are given a rating from 0 (Urgent Improvement Necessary) to 5 (Very Good) which reflects the food hygiene standards found at the time of inspection.
2.4	With an increasing trend for consumers to purchase food online, a key provision within the Act is for online display of food business Food Hygiene Ratings to further increase the accessibility of this information.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>The introduction of the Food Hygiene Rating (Online Display) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023 will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require an operator of a food business establishment, which supplies a consumer with food ordered via an online facility, to ensure that the facility displays an online icon (the form of the online Food Hygiene Rating) representing the valid Food Hygiene Rating in respect of that establishment. Prescribe the form of a valid Food Hygiene Rating icon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To support the proposed legislative requirements FSA are developing a range of digital icons which will take the form of a Food Hygiene Rating and will align with the style and branding of the Food Hygiene Rating sticker visible at food business establishments. The new icons will be freely available on the FSA's ratings website (www.food.gov.uk/ratings), and will deliver improved digital imagery that supports the FHRS 'brand' and meet new accessibility requirements.
3.2	It is anticipated that the new rules will come into force in April 2023.
3.3	Northern Ireland Food Managers Group, which sits under Environmental Health Northern Ireland (EHNI), has prepared a response to the FSA's consultation on The Food Hygiene Rating (Online Display) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023. The deadline for response was 9 th September 2022 however with no committee meetings in August, Council still have a mechanism to provide feedback therefore the proposed consultation response is enclosed for Members consideration and any comments/amendments.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: N/A during this current consultation phase.
	Human: Officer time to prepare and submit a consultation response.
	Risk Management: N/A during this current consultation phase.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
	Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To note the contents of this report and give approval for the enclosed draft consultation response to the consultation on The Food Hygiene Rating (Online Display) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023.

6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix A: Mid Ulster District Council's proposed response to the FSA's Consultation on The Food Hygiene Rating (Online Display) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023.
6.2	The full consultation packaging can be viewed at the following link: The Food Hygiene Rating (Online Display) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023 Food Standards Agency