

Report on	The Food Standards Agency's consultation on proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland)
Date of Meeting	15 th May 2025
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Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To provide Members with opportunity to respond to the Food Standards Agency's consultation on proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland).
2.0	Background
2.1	The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has launched a consultation exercise on proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice (Northern Ireland) and Practice Guidance. The Consultation closes on 19 May 2025.
2.2	The Food Law Code sets out instructions and criteria to which District Councils in Northern Ireland must have regard when discharging their duties in relation to the delivery of official food control activities.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The FSA consultation exercise seeks stakeholders' views on proposed changes to the Northern Ireland Food Law Code and Practice Guidance.
3.2	Information contained within the Appendix sets out the scope and detail of the consultation - the key proposals / amendments include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An updated risk-based approach to the prioritisation and timescales for undertaking initial food hygiene official controls of new food establishments • Enabling, in certain circumstances, an establishment's food hygiene intervention risk rating to be amended following a wider range of official control methods and techniques, including those undertaken remotely • Extending the activities that officers who do not hold a specified qualification for food hygiene or standards, can, if competent, undertake • A clarification in approach to interventions at food hygiene establishments that fall into risk category E for food hygiene. • Removal of a prescriptive number of hours required for continuing professional development.

3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other amendments to reflect legislative change, provide clarity, improve consistency, and keep pace with current practices. <p>The Northern Ireland Food Managers Group, a sub-group of Environmental Health Northern Ireland (EHNI), has prepared a coordinated response to the FSA's consultation on proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland). The regional consultation response has been reviewed by Mid Ulster District Council's Environmental Health Service and the department's draft response is enclosed within the appendix for Members consideration.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: None anticipated – FSA will provide any necessary training at no cost to Council.</p> <p>Human: FSA has estimated 1.25 hours per officer will be required for familiarisation with the proposed amendments to the Code.</p> <p>Risk Management: None anticipated at this juncture</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.</p>
5.0	<p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>5.1 It is recommended that Members agree the attached draft response to the FSA's consultation on proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland)</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix 1 – FSA Consultation on amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland).
6.2	Appendix 2 – Mid Ulster District Council draft consultation response on proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland).