



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2018 /19

FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REGISTER OF FOOD BUSINESSES IN RCT

11th December 2018

***REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY
SERVICES***

**AUTHOR: Louise Davies, Head of Public Protection
Rhian Hope, Food and Health & Safety Manager**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the current arrangements for maintaining a register of food businesses in the County Borough and to advise members of the ways in which this information is currently used by the Public Protection Service and the Regeneration Service to promote local food businesses.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Scrutinise the current arrangements for maintaining a statutory food business database and for promoting food businesses in RCT.

- 2.2 Further to recommendation 2.1, to make any recommendations to enhance current arrangements or to further promote local businesses.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 At the Council meeting on the 24th October, the following Notice of Motion was received and it was resolved to refer the matter to the Finance and Performance Committee for further consideration:

“We should all play our part in supporting our local economy and SMEs who make up the majority of it. In an effort to better support our local food production companies, this Council will create a food produce register. The register will list all local food and drink producers in the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf with the aim of encouraging and promoting an increase in the marketing and consumption of local produce, thereby supporting the local economy.”

4. **THE CURRENT FOOD PREMISES REGISTER**

- 4.1 The Council maintains a comprehensive list of all food businesses, including manufacturers and suppliers that operate across Rhondda Cynon Taf. Food business operators are required under Regulation (EC) 852/2004 to register and inform the Council that they intend to start trading 28 days before they do so and to notify the Council of any material changes in the operation of the food business. This enables the Council’s Public Protection Service to engage with the business and offer appropriate advice and support in relation to food safety and hygiene, food standards, labelling and allergens in particular. We aim to provide a fair trading environment for local businesses as well as protection for consumers.
- 4.2 The information received for the food register enables the Council to plan its food law enforcement activity. The Regulations specify the information that must be provided by a food business operator and is outlined in Appendix 1. The register is maintained via a central database and is maintained by the Public Protection Service. It is a public register and is currently available from the Council on request.

- 4.3 The food premises register currently comprises of 2031 businesses, many of which would be regarded as small or medium sized enterprises and include 68 local producers and manufacturers as well as high quality catering businesses operating across our towns and villages. A breakdown of business type can be seen IN Table 1 below and this information is taken from the Food and Feed Service Plan 2018/2019 which is produced annually and published on the council website. The list and breakdown represents a snap shot of premises at the beginning of each financial year however the register is constantly changing as new businesses open and others close. The legal requirements in relation to food standards and food hygiene differ meaning registered businesses may be liable for both types of enforcement activity while others are liable only for one. This accounts for the difference in total premises for each type of food law activity.
- 4.4 Currently 92.7 % (Quarter 2 18/19) of our premises achieve a food hygiene rating of 3 or more with over 45.3 % achieving a score of 5 which is the highest rating. We share this information publically via the Food Standards Agency Website and know that this information helps our residents and visitors make informed choices about where to shop and eat in the County Borough. The Council's Public Protection Service has also launched a new Facebook Page aimed at promoting local businesses called "*Confident Business RCT*" and ensuring we have an efficient social media platform to engage directly with businesses and their customers, to share information about best practice and legal changes and help businesses navigate the regulatory landscape. Every month, food businesses that have achieved a 5 Rating Score for food hygiene are publicised via this page. The "*RCT Trading Standards*" Facebook Page is also used to inform mainly consumers about food alerts (such as food product recalls) and information that protects them as consumers.

Table 1: Registered Food Businesses by Premises Type

Type of Premises	Number of Premises Food Hygiene	Number of Premises Food Standards
Primary Producer	6	13
Manufacturer / Packer	55	55
Importer / Exporter (EU)	0	0
Distributer / Transporter	29	28
Supermarket/Hypermarket	46	50
Small Retailer	331	327
Retailer Other	105	84
Restaurant/Cafe/Canteen	320	316
Hotel/Guesthouse	7	6
Pub/Club	313	315
Takeaway	235	235
Caring Premises	261	233
School/College	131	129
Mobile Food Unit	90	92
Restaurant and Caterers Other	102	100
Total number of premises	2031	1983

4.5 Departments across the Council are already using this register to inform the development of information portals for our visitors and tourists to promote the local economy and promote our food establishments. This work is being taken forward by our Tourism Service with a pilot project being developed to promote the Upper Rhondda as a visitor destination. The Regeneration Service is also mapping all businesses across RCT, including food businesses, to improve our knowledge of the business sector and help develop a Business Engagement Strategy. This data-source can provide information on food and drink producers

to add further detail to the existing food register if required. The Regeneration Service supports such producers (alongside most other industry sectors) with financial support via its Enterprise Support Grant for those businesses that are investing for growth and job creation. It also signposts such businesses to support resources e.g. via Welsh Government.

- 4.6 In relation to the use of local suppliers by the Local Authority, RCT along with many other Wales local authorities has signed a framework agreement that food procurement is undertaken through the National Procurement Service (NPS). This service is currently under review by Welsh Government which may result in some areas falling out of scope for the service, and being procured regionally or locally via individual or consortia of local authorities. It is to be determined whether food procurement remains as part of the NPS in the future.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There are no consultation issues arising from this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The cost of maintaining the statutory food register is met from existing budgets within Public Protection.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Food business operators are required under Regulation (EC) 852/2004 to register and inform the Council that they intend to start trading 28 days before they do so and to notify the Council of any material changes in the operation of the food business. Failure to register with the Council is an offence.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Council has a statutory duty to maintain the current register of food businesses. The existing database is available as a public register. Significant resources are required to maintain the integrity of this register as it directly informs the Council's food law enforcement activity. The information is being shared and used by other Council departments for initiatives which promote certain sectors to promote economic growth or other geographical areas of the Council as visitor destinations.

Appendix 1: Food Business Registration Form

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Register of Food Businesses in RCT

11 DECEMBER 2018

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Minutes of Council Meeting held on the 24th October 2018

