



Subject:	The Food Hygiene Rating Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
Date:	11 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Assistant Director, City & Neighbourhood Services Department
Contact Officer:	Damian Connolly Environmental Health Manager (Food Safety)

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To update Members on the implementation of the Food Hygiene Rating Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none">Note the contents of this report.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> Belfast City Council adopted the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in June 2011, shortly after its introduction by The Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland (FSANI). Since that date Council has been rating the standards of food hygiene compliance observed by Food Safety Officers during inspections and publishing this information on line. Business are provided with window stickers and are encouraged to display their rating, however, as there is no legal requirement to do so many businesses, particularly the poorer rated, do not. Research by FSANI has shown that only 50% of businesses in Northern Ireland display the rating and it is visible before entering in only 38% of cases. For the businesses with poorer hygiene ratings only 22% are displaying their rating. In 2013 FSANI proposed making it mandatory for businesses to display their rating in a prominent position in an effort to

	ensure consumers can access the information easily and thereby make the scheme more effective.
3.2	On 29 th January 2016 the Food Hygiene Rating Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 received Royal Assent. The Act introduces the new mandatory Food Hygiene Rating Scheme which legally requires, for the first time, food business operators to display a valid food hygiene rating sticker at each public entrance. This will ensure that customers have this important information to hand before deciding where to eat; consequently it is hoped that this will raise standards of hygiene within premises as businesses strive to attain the highest rating possible; this should enhance consumer confidence in food safety.
3.4	The new Act places a statutory duty on Council to rate food establishments and enforce the legislative requirements. Council officers will be able, if necessary, to issue fixed penalty notices for non compliance or indeed instigate legal proceedings. Council will also be able to recover the costs of any revisits to premises by charging a fee for this service.
3.5	On 13 th September 2016 the Department of Health made the Food Hygiene Rating (2016 Act) (Commencement) Order (NI) 2016, appointing 7 th October 2016 as the implementation day for the Act.
3.6	The Council currently has approximately 2700 premises within the scope of the scheme of which 85% have a good or very good compliance rating (rated 4 or 5). Appendix 1.
3.7	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> None
3.8	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> None
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1 - Table showing numbers of food premises in each rating category.