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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>7 March 2017</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report</b>	<b>EDUCOM/19/17/MM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Martin McNab</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>4246</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Food Standards Scotland Audit of Food Safety Enforcement</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the outcome of a recent audit of the Authority's Food Service by Food Standards Scotland.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Members may recall that the Food Control Service of Inverclyde Council received a "clean" core audit from Food Standards Scotland in June 2015. This report advises the Committee of a subsequent Capacity and Capability Audit carried out in January 2017.
- 2.2 Food Control is carried out in Inverclyde by the Food & Health Team which is part of the Environmental Health function delivered by Safer & Inclusive Communities.
- 2.3 The January 2017 audit was a second successive "clean" audit for the team in just over 18 months.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That the Committee notes the outcome of the Capacity & Capability Audit of the food control function of Inverclyde Council's Environmental Health Service.

**Martin McNab,  
Acting Head of Safer & Inclusive Communities**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Members may recall a report to the September 2015 Committee on a successful audit of the Authority's Food Service by Food Standards Scotland in June 2015. The audit, which was the first since 2011, was a core audit of the food service. This was a successful audit which made no recommendations for improvements and highlighted good practice in the service. One of the key findings of the 2015 audit was that "Officers were.... knowledgeable about the premises, the authority's policies and procedures, the relevant legislation and had the confidence of food business operators." In light of the successful outcome of the 2015 audit, there was an expectation that there would not be a further audit for some time.

4.2 Since 2015 however Food Standards Scotland has revised its policy on audit. This introduced a four category assurance scheme for audits based upon Scottish Government auditing practices on a red , orange, yellow and green basis with the red category indicating unacceptable controls with notable weaknesses through to green indicating controls being robust and well managed.

4.3 In concert with the changed policy, FSS commenced a three year audit programme in November 2016. The programme involves two main themes one of which is a "Capacity and Capability Audit". The specific aims of this audit programme are to:

- evaluate the organisational, management and information systems in place to ensure they are effective and suitable to achieve the objectives of the relevant food law.
- assess the capacity and capability of the Local Authority to deliver the food service.
- provide a means to identify under-performance in Local Authority food law enforcement systems.
- assist in the identification and dissemination of good practice to aid consistency.
- provide information to aid the formulation of Food Standards Scotland policy.

One of the major operational changes from previous audits was to reduce the notice given to authorities prior to audit from six weeks to ten working days. Local Authorities will be selected for the on-site audit based on information gathered via an information gathering exercise carried out in July 2016 and any other sources of information already available.

4.4 Safer & Inclusive Communities received notice that the food service was to be subject to a Capacity and Capability Audit on 21 December 2016. The three day audit was to commence on Monday 16 January 2017. Officers were obviously concerned as to why the authority had been selected for audit within 18 months of a prior "clean" audit. The audit documentation suggested that authorities would be selected for audit based upon "information gathered via the information gathering exercise and any other sources of information already available". The information gathering exercise was carried out in June 2016 and there were no material changes in information given to that which had pertained in 2015.

## 5.0 AUDIT FINDINGS

5.1 Inverclyde Council was the third authority to be audited under the Capacity and Capability Audit. Officers concerns were allayed at the opening meeting where the auditors made clear that they had selected Inverclyde in order to calibrate their audit process. The first two audits had been fairly challenging and they wished to carry out an audit in an authority where they expected the food service to be well run and capable as a result of previous audits. This would enable them to check that there were no issues with their audit process.

5.2 The audit proceeded without incident over the three days and there were no recommendations for improvement at the end of the process. The auditors stated at the closing meeting that Inverclyde was the first authority in Scotland to have received two clean audits in succession. The final audit report is available to members.

5.3 The result of the audit is particularly satisfying given that the spend per head of population on food control in Inverclyde was £2.09 in 2015-16. This placed Inverclyde at fourth lowest of the 18 Scottish authorities submitting complete data to APSE benchmarking in 2015-16. For comparison, the lowest was reported as £1.97 with the average being £3.18. Inverclyde also obviously does not have the advantages of scale of some larger authorities.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

### Finance

6.1

#### Financial Implications:

##### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

##### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

### Legal

6.2 None

### Human Resources

6.3 None

### Equalities

6.4 None.

### Repopulation

6.5 None.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Items for Noting – Communities – Education & Communities Committee September 2015  
**EDUCOM/75/15/MM**