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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Place Scrutiny Committee

Date: Monday, 10th July, 2023
Time: 6.30 pm
Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

Contact: Tim Row - Principal Democratic Services Officer
Email: committeesection@southend.gov.uk

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Questions from Members of the Public
- 4 Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 5th June, 2023 (Pages 3 - 6)
- **** **ITEMS FOR PRE-CABINET SCRUTINY/CALLED-IN FROM THE FORWARD PLAN**
- 5 Official Feed and Service Plan 2023-24 (Pages 7 - 38)
- **** **OTHER SCRUTINY MATTERS**
- 6 In-Depth Scrutiny Projects 2022/23 and 2023/24 (Pages 39 - 52)
- 7 Outside Bodies Task and Finish Group
Report to follow
- 8 Work Programme
A copy of the Scrutiny work programme to follow

TO: The Chair & Members of the Place Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor R Woodley (Chair),
Councillors C Mulroney (Vice-Chair), M Berry, C Campbell, O Cartey, D Cowan, A Dear,
F Evans, I Gilbert, J Harland, L Hyde, A Jones, D Jones, K Robinson, M Terry, C Walker
and J Warren

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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee

Date: Monday, 5th June, 2023

Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

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Present: Councillor R Woodley (Chair)
Councillors C Mulroney (Vice-Chair), M Berry, C Campbell, O Cartey,
D Cowan, A Dear, F Evans, I Gilbert, J Harland, L Hyde, A Jones,
D Jones, K Robinson, M Terry, C Walker and J Warren

In Attendance: Councillors K Buck, T Cox, M Davidson and D Garston (Cabinet
Members),
Councillors B Beggs and M Dent
T Row

Start/End Time: 6.30 pm - 8.05 pm

1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

(i) Cllr Hyde – Minute No. 6 (Site Known as ‘Land between Barge Pier Road and Ness Road’ – Vehicle Movements) – Primary employer is with the Lighthouse Authority which deals with any matters relating to planning and building within waterways;

(ii) Cllr A Jones – Minute No. 6 (Site Known as ‘Land between Barge Pier Road and Ness Road’ – Vehicle Movements) – Son’s employer was mentioned in the debate;

(iii) Cllr Woodley – Minute No. 6 (Site Known as ‘Land between Barge Pier Road and Ness Road’ – Vehicle Movements) – Raised the petition requesting the Council consider alternative options; and

(iv) Cllrs Berry, Buck, Dear, Evans, Dent, Garston, A Jones, Mulroney, Walker & Woodley – Minute No. 6 (Site Known as ‘Land between Barge Pier Road and Ness Road’ – Vehicle Movements) – Members of the Development Control Committee which determined the application.

3 Questions from Members of the Public

The Committee noted the responses from the Cabinet Member for Environment to a question from Mr Hardiman and Mr Webb. The Committee also noted the response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Parking to a question from Mr Webb. Both questioners were in attendance at the meeting to put their questions in person.

4 Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 13th March, 2023

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 13th March 2023 be received, confirmed as a correct record.

5 Minutes of the special meeting held on Tuesday 4th April, 2023

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the special meeting held on Tuesday, 4th April 2023 be received, confirmed as a correct record and signed.

6 Site known as 'Land between Barge Pier Road and Ness Road' - Vehicle movements

Further to Minute No. 762 of the meeting of Council held on Thursday 2nd March 2023, the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods & Environment), by way of pre-Cabinet scrutiny, that provided an update on the options that may exist for the developer to transport the spoil in relation to the development on the land between Barge Pier Road and Ness Road, Shoeburyness by means other than the city's road network.

The Committee discussed the report in some detail and asked a number of questions which were responded to by the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Parking.

Whilst noting the report, the Committee requested that the following comments be forwarded to Cabinet:

- The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport & Parking be included in the discussions with between the Council's Head of Civil Engineering and/or Director for Transport & Waste and the developer in respect of this matter;
- That the issues regarding the Air Quality Management areas be included in the discussions on this matter with the developer; and
- That a further report on the outcome of the discussions with the developer be submitted to the Committee for consideration prior to it be determined by Cabinet. This report should include the legal situation clearly setting out the legal responsibilities of the Council as Highway Authority and any liabilities the Council could face in the event that the development authorised by the planning permission already granted by the Council as Local Planning Authority becomes unviable as a result of any restrictions that may be subsequently imposed by the Council as Highway Authority.

The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Parking gave their assurance that this would be done.

Resolved:-

That, subject to the inclusion of the above comments, the report and to Cabinet be noted.

Note: This is an Executive function
Cabinet Member: Cllr Buck

7 Work Programme Evaluation 2022/23

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director (Finance & Resources) providing information on the work carried out by the scrutiny committees during the previous municipal year.

Resolved:-

1. That the Committee note the summary of the scrutiny work that it has undertaken during the 2022/23 municipal year.
2. That the completion of the in-depth scrutiny project undertaken for 2022/23, around the theme of 'Preparing Southend for the EV Revolution', be noted.

Note: This is a scrutiny function.

Chair: _____

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Meeting: Cabinet
Date: 18 July 2023
Classification: Part 1
Key Decision: Yes
Title of Report: **Official Feed and Food Control Service Plan 2023-24**

Executive Director: Alan Richards (Interim Executive Director - Environment & Place)

Report Author: Elizabeth Georgeou (Head of Regulatory Services)

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The service plan has been drafted in accordance with the service planning guidance of the Framework Agreement.
- 1.2. The plan has been developed in line with the Food Standards Agency priorities for both feed and food, ensuring a risk-based controls in place across the region. It seeks to meet the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice.
- 1.3. This plan details the national enforcement priorities for animal feed, with inspections being co-ordinated through the National Trading Standards Board (NTSB) and the Food Standards Agency (FSA).
- 1.4. It reports the activities for the previous inspection year against the plan for 2022-23.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Food Standards Agency provides guidance on the priorities for the delivery of the official food controls and sets out what the local authority should include in the service plan. There is a requirement for the plan to be approved at an appropriate level. The plan details how this authority will prioritise its resources and provides an estimate of the resource required to deliver those priorities.

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.2. **Note the achievements against the previous Plan 2022-23**
- 2.3. **Approve the Official Feed and Food Control Service Plan 2023-24 'The Plan' (Appendix 1) and recommend its adoption by Full Council.**

3. Background

- 3.1. The Food Standards requires the production and publication of a service plan to ensure the highest achievable levels of food control (food safety, standards and feeding stuffs) are maintained throughout the city. Every local authority is required to develop an annual food service plan, which is the basis on which the local authorities are monitored and audited by the FSA.
- 3.2. The Service Plan recognises that resource may be required to assist Public Health in the event of future pandemic controls, which may be provided by Regulatory Services.
- 3.3. To ensure local transparency and accountability, it is a requirement that the Official Feed and Food Controls Service Plan is submitted to an appropriate level of approval, which can be determined by the local authority.
- 3.4. The Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 requires Regulators to have regard to the Principles of Good Regulation. This means that activities should be carried out in a way that is proportionate, accountable, consistent and transparent. The Statutory Code of Practice for Regulators which will include the provisions contained in the Regulators Code April 2014 contains details of how this should be carried out.
- 3.5. The Food Standards Agency directs the Authority on the priorities for inspection and interventions, which is based on risk. The details of the risk-based approach are detailed in the Food Law Code of Practice¹.
- 3.6. Regulatory Services completed all the targeted interventions that were required by the Food Standards Agency in 2022-23 based the recovery plan issued by the Agency.
- 3.7. Businesses are supported with advice, which assists them to comply with legislation. The plan also supports Southend businesses to export to the EU. This is achieved through the inspection of fishing vessels, reviewing controls at exporting premises and a certification service to enable goods to move freely across the EU.
- 3.8. The Service Plan for 2023-2024 is attached as **Appendix 1** and forms an integral part of the organisation of the Regulatory Services within Public Protection.
- 3.9. In accordance with the requirements contained within the Framework Agreement, the food service is a mix of enforcement, intelligence-based work, investigation, advice and education.
- 3.10. Progress through the Service Plan is monitored monthly. Resource will be directed to additional contracted inspections where required.

¹ The Food Law Code of Practice - <https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>

4. Reasons for Decisions

- 4.1. To comply with the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement and in line with the Food Standards Agency audit findings. The audit findings were agreed by Cabinet on 18 June 2013.

5. Other Options

- 5.1. The Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement sets out the statutory duty for Southend-on-Sea City Council to develop a Service Plan. There is no alternative to statutory duties and the inspection priorities are detailed in the Food Law Code of Practice. Deviation from these priorities may initiate an audit by the Food Standards Agency, and the authority may be required to agree an action plan to bring the inspection programme back into compliance.
- 5.2. The council could reduce the non-statutory activities, such as routine sampling, support for events and the certification of fishery products. This may reduce the council's ability to understand and respond to emerging issues which support the prosperity of the town.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The Service Plan for 2023-2024 identifies resources allocated to the service and the budget is within the Regulatory Services' overall budget. The plan recognises that resource may be diverted to assist with emerging issues and the Service Plan may be altered in response to that demand.
- 6.2. Where relevant grant funding is available the service will make an application. Last year the service secured funding to undertake surveillance sampling for imported foods and to undertake a data cleansing exercise.
- 6.3. The report has been reviewed by a senior officer of the finance team.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. The FSA places a requirement on local authorities to develop a Service Plan and provides guidance on what should be contained within the plan.
- 7.2. The authority has the flexibility to decide locally whether the plan is approved at Member, Member forum or suitably delegated senior officer level.
- 7.3. The plan is in the Council's policy framework and is required to be recommended by Cabinet for adoption at Full Council.
- 7.4. Local Authorities are audited and assessed by the FSA on the basis of their compliance with the framework agreement.

8. Policy Context

- 8.1 Supports economic regeneration and business development and enhances tourism, cultural and the leisure offer, through the regulation and advice provided to businesses.
- 8.2 The plan also enables people to age well, live well and care well through enabling a safe food environment and to the promotion of preventing waste.
- 8.3 Contributes to Pride and Joy, Safe and Well, Opportunity and Prosperity and Active and Involved.

9. Carbon Impact

- 9.1. The plan adopts the principle of making every contact count. When completing interventions the team will assess against compliance with the new legislation on single use plastic use, including the use of straws. The purpose of this is to prevent waste and protect the natural environment. The Head of Climate Change has reviewed the report.

10. Equalities

- 10.1. An equalities impact assessment has been completed. Where potential impacts were identified there were measures in place within the plan to mitigate these impacts.

11. Consultation

- 11.1. There is no consultation undertaken on this plan as it is developed in line with the Food Standards Agency statutory requirements. The plan is publicly available following adoption.

12. Appendices

- 12.1. **Appendix 1** Official Feed and Food Control Service Plan 2023-24

Southend on Sea City Council
Department for Neighbourhoods and Environment
Regulatory Services

Official Feed and Food Control Service Plan 2023-24

Elizabeth Georgeou

Head of Regulatory Services

June 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Service Plan has been prepared by the Regulatory Services team of Southend-on-Sea City Council, linking into the Council's corporate priorities and the 2050 ambition for the future.
- 1.2 The Service Plan is structured in accordance with the service planning guidance contained in the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement. Powers to enable the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to monitor and audit local authorities are contained in the Food Standards Act 1999. In accordance with this guidance the plan will be submitted to the relevant Member or senior officer forum for approval to ensure local transparency and accountability.
- 1.3 The purpose of the Service Plan is to ensure that national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally in accordance with the relevant codes of practice and guidance. It details the contribution that Regulatory Services makes to the ambition for the Council with respect to feed and food.
- 1.4 Last years' Service Plan 2022-23 supported the Food Standards Agency recovery plan. This required the local authority to prioritise high risk activities and to catch up with the delivery of official controls for lower risk premises to be in line with the Food Law Code of Practice inspection frequencies. The Food Standards Agency requirement for 2023-24 is that official controls be delivered in line with the current Food Law Code of Practice, and this has been taken into account in the development of this plan.

2.0 Service Aims and Objectives

2.1 Aims and Objectives

The delivery of this plan aims to:

- Ensure that the highest achievable levels of feed and food control (food safety, standards and feeding stuffs).

The objectives are to:

- Ensure hygienic conditions in the sale, preparation, manufacture, and storage of foodstuffs and feeding stuffs.
- Ensure the wholesomeness and appropriate labelling/composition of foodstuffs and feeding stuffs.
- Focus on a risk-based approach to inspections and enforcement activity in accordance with the Council's Environment and Regulatory Enforcement Policy.
- Administer the legislation in compliance with the approved codes of practice and related official guidance.
- Continue participation in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS).
- Focus on the local enforcement of illegal harvesting of shellfish and linking to the FSA Food Crime Unit and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority objectives.
- Provide guidance and assistance to local businesses on regulatory compliance and on new arrangements now the UK has left the European Union (EU).
- Provide guidance and assist local businesses with respect to infectious disease controls.

2.2 The Aim of the Service is to support the Council's Corporate Priorities and 2050 Ambitions

- 2.3 The Council achieved city status in 2021. The feed and food service plan aligns with the 2022-2026 corporate plan. The delivery of the service supports economic regeneration and business development and enhances tourism, cultural and the leisure offer. This is achieved through the regulation and advice provided to businesses. The plan also enables people to age well, live well and care well through enabling a safe food environment and to the promotion of preventing waste.

- 2.4 It links to the Council's 2050 ambitions for those living, working, and visiting the city. The activities that Regulatory Services undertakes contributes to the aims and outcomes of the 2050 themes for Pride and Joy, Safe and Well, Opportunity and Prosperity and Active and Involved.
- 2.5 The Service Plan shows how the team contributes to a Southend in which people can be proud of the services, supporting the safety and wellbeing of those who work, live, and visit the town. To support the economic development team by helping businesses grow though assisting and supporting these businesses so that they bring prosperity to the town. Corporate priorities and the 2050 objectives are reviewed at staff conversations and assists in integrating the service across the organisation.
- 2.6 Public Health (PH) are working on a Healthy Southend approach, which will encompass both food and the environment to deliver the changes that are required to diets. This integrated approach is to meet existing government targets of reducing high fat, salt, and sugar consumption and to support people to make healthier choices.

3.0 Background

3.1 Profile of the Area

- 3.2 Southend-on-Sea City Council is a unitary authority. It is a seaside town which is a tourist destination with local shopping areas covering 6,785 hectares and is the closest seaside resort to London. It is located within the Thames Gateway region, with visitor numbers in 2021 of 5,435,900, and may reach the pre-pandemic levels of 7.5 million. There are seasonal businesses within the city, and the Council actively promotes events to support business prosperity across the Council area.
- 3.3 The total population estimate for 2021 was 180,700. The Southend Skills Strategy Evidence review for Southend-on-Sea January 2023 showed the following:

Figure 2.8: Share of employment by industry, 2021

| Industry | Employe Southend- on-Sea | % Employment | | | Difference | |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| | | Southend -on-Sea | South Essex | England | South Essex | England |
| Agriculture, forestry and fishing | 100 | 0.2% | 0.3% | 1.3% | -0.1 | -1.1 |
| Mining and quarrying | 0 | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | 0.0 | -0.1 |
| Manufacturing | 4,000 | 6.1% | 6.0% | 7.3% | 0.1 | -1.2 |
| Electricity, gas, steam supply | 50 | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.4% | 0.0 | -0.3 |
| Water supply and sewerage | 75 | 0.1% | 0.7% | 0.7% | -0.6 | -0.6 |
| Construction | 3,000 | 4.5% | 7.6% | 4.9% | -3.1 | -0.4 |
| Wholesale and retail trade | 10,000 | 15.2% | 16.5% | 14.4% | -1.3 | 0.8 |
| Transportation and storage | 1,750 | 2.7% | 8.6% | 5.2% | -5.9 | -2.5 |
| Accommodation and food | 6,000 | 9.1% | 6.7% | 7.4% | 2.4 | 1.7 |
| Information and communication | 1,500 | 2.3% | 3.2% | 4.5% | -0.9 | -2.2 |
| Financial and insurance activities | 1,500 | 2.3% | 2.5% | 3.6% | -0.2 | -1.3 |
| Real estate activities | 1,250 | 1.9% | 1.6% | 2.0% | 0.3 | -0.1 |
| Professional, scientific, technical | 6,000 | 9.1% | 7.6% | 9.3% | 1.5 | -0.2 |
| Admin & support services | 6,000 | 9.1% | 9.5% | 8.9% | -0.4 | 0.2 |
| Public admin and defence | 3,000 | 4.5% | 4.1% | 4.1% | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| Education | 7,000 | 10.6% | 9.2% | 8.5% | 1.4 | 2.1 |
| Health and social work activities | 11,000 | 16.7% | 11.7% | 13.1% | 5.0 | 3.6 |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation | 2,250 | 3.4% | 2.2% | 2.3% | 1.2 | 1.1 |
| Other service activities | 1,250 | 1.9% | 1.9% | 2.0% | 0.0 | -0.1 |

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, Office for National Statistics

- 3.4 The main share of employment relevant to food premises are those within the wholesale and retail trade (15.2%) and transportation and storage (2.7%) although these includes non-food activities and accommodation and food (9.1%).
- 3.5 It should be noted that the covid-19 pandemic caused Southend's economy to contract by 13% in 2020. The most affected industries were transportation and storage and consumer facing services (other services activities, accommodation and food service activities, and arts, entertainment and recreation).
- 3.6 There were job gains in some areas which have been offset by losses in other areas. It is reported that over the period 2015 to 2021, Southend-on-Sea experienced no overall jobs growth. Strong job gains in Accommodation and Food Service Activities (+1,000) and Administrative and Support Service Activities (+1,000) were offset by heavy job losses in Wholesale and Retail Trade (-1,000), which will include food businesses, Other Service Activities (-500), Public Administration (-500), and Construction (-500).
- 3.7 Organisational Structure**
- 3.8 The Council structure with respect to delivery of the feed and food services together with details of individual responsibilities is presented in Annex 1 of this plan.
- 3.9 Microbiological Examination and Public Analyst**
- 3.10 The Council sends food for microbiological examination to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Laboratory at Colindale via a collection service.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>UKHSA Food Water and Environmental Microbiology Lab 61 Colindale Avenue London NW9 5EQ 0208 327 6548 /6550 Fax: 020 8327 6542 fwem@phe.gov.uk</p> | <p>Consultant of Communicable Disease Control (CCDC), PHE East of England, Health Protection Team, Second Floor, Goodman House, Station Approach, Harlow CM20 2ET Tel : 0300 303 8537 Fax : 01223 724499 Email : EastofEnglandHPT@phe.gov.uk <u>uk</u> Secure email mailto:phe.eoehpt@nhs.net</p> | <p>Stool Samples</p> <p>Pathology First Helpdesk Tel 01268-968300</p> <p>Reports provide by David Marquez Information Manager at Pathology First david.marquez@pathologyfirst.co.uk <u>uk</u> non-secure emails to david.marquez@synlab.co.uk</p> <p>Specimen Reception Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Prittlewell Chase, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex SS0 0RY Tel 01702-385564/ 385411</p> |
|---|---|---|

- 3.11 The appointed Public Analysts for feed and foods are located at:

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Feed Agricultural Analyst – Mr Jonathon David Griffin Kent Scientific Services 8 Abbey Wood Road Kings Hill West Malling ME19 4YT</p> <p>Tel: 03000 41 51 00 kss@kent.gov.uk</p> | <p>Food Public Analyst – Duncan Arthur Public Analyst Scientific Services Limited 154 Business Park Valiant Way Wolverhampton WV9 5GB</p> <p>Tel: +44 (0) 7734 383707 (Direct) +44 (0) 1902 627238 (General) duncanarthur@publicanalystservices.co.uk http://publicanalystservices.co.uk</p> |
|--|---|

3.12 Scope of Regulatory Services

3.13 Regulatory Services is part of Public Protection which sits within Neighbourhoods and Environment. The team aligns the delivery of its services to the corporate priorities and the Council's 2050 ambitions. This is achieved through supporting those living, working, and visiting the city to stay safe and well when using the services of businesses throughout the city. They also assist businesses to prosper by supporting compliant businesses and targeting resources to the less compliant businesses.

3.14 With respect to feed and food the responsibilities of Regulatory Services are to:

- Undertake proactive food safety and standards inspections.
- Undertake proactive feed inspections.
- Deal with imported food and feed matters.
- Investigate complaints about food and feed.
- Investigate complaints about food and feed premises.
- Investigate food poisoning and infectious disease referrals/complaints.
- Deal with health and safety and PH matters at food premises related to drainage, industrial noise, /and rubbish.
- Assess businesses against single use plastic use, including the use of straws contributing to preventing waste and protecting the natural environment.
- Trading standards issues.
- Animal health.
- Respond to emerging PH issues.
- Respond to reports of illegal shellfish harvesting.
- Provide consultation recommendations on planning, licensing, and event applications.
- Regulate businesses to ensure that those who are purchasing foods based on price alone are not adversely affected by poor quality foods.
- Advice to be given to those providing Community fridges and Food Banks.
- Participate with the delivery of the PH integrated approach for healthy Southend; and
- Provide business advice.

3.15 Demands on the Regulatory Services Team

3.16 The Service uses the Uniform database, which is an ICT supported application, linked to the property gazetteer. Table 1 below highlights the food premises profile as of 31st March 2023.

Table 1: Food Premises profile as of 31st March 2023.

| FSA category | Number |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| A | 1 |
| B | 44 |
| C- broadly compliant | 283 |
| C- less than broadly compliant | 37 |
| D - broadly compliant | 680 |
| D - less than broadly compliant | 23 |
| E | 467 |
| Awaiting intervention | 25 |
| Outside the programme | 85* |
| Total | 1645 |

*Those outside the programme are to be re-evaluated to be in line with the new reporting guidance.

3.17 Table 2 highlights the inspections due in line with the Food Law Code of Practice:

Table 2: Food Hygiene Inspections Due:

| FSA Category | No. of Premises | Frequency Required | Due 2023 – 2024e |
|--|------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| A | 1 | Every 6 months | 2 |
| B | 44 | Every 12 months | 44 |
| C | 320 | Every 18 months | 209 |
| D | 703 | Every 24 months | 441 |
| E | 467 | Alternative enforcement or every three years | 246 |
| Awaiting Inspection, includes overdue* | 25 | | 25 |
| Not in programme+ | 85 | | 0 |
| Total Inspections due as at 01/04/23 | | | 966 |

*Fluctuation in year as new premises register and are inspected which will affect the number of premises due for inspection in year compared to the start of the year. Last year there were 203 new food registrations throughout the year. The awaiting inspection figure have all been triaged through a risk-based assessment and have been allocated for inspection where needed.

+Includes premises undertaking very low risk activities e.g., selling pre-packed bars and providing teas and coffees, the requirement of which to continue to be registered will be assessed in line with current guidance.

- 3.18 With regards to business' included on the database, child-minders are not currently included as they are registered with the Council's Early Years team, and a risk-based approach is taken. The team disseminates information to Childminders and the Early Years Team work with Regulatory Services so that interventions are undertaken where required. This will be reviewed when the new Food Law Code of Practice is issued.
- 3.19 The awaiting inspection figure includes home-caterers, where the team have undertaken information gathering to identify low risk premises and prioritises high-risk interventions.
- 3.20 The Food Law Code of Practice (FLCoP) requires that Category A - B food hygiene, Category A food standards and non-compliant C premises be subject to an inspection, partial inspection, or audit at the required interval. Broadly compliant C risk food hygiene premises and broadly compliant B risk food standards can alternate between inspection, partial inspection audit and other Official Controls.
- 3.21 Category D risk premises can only alternate between an intervention which is an Official Control, and an intervention that is not an Official Control, if the potential hazard element at risk assessment is less than 30 and they are broadly compliant.
- 3.22 Premises rated E for food hygiene and C for food standards can be subject to an alternative enforcement strategy.

3.23 Table 3 below indicates the required number of food standard inspections in line with the Food Law Code of Practice.

Table 3 Food Standards Inspections Due:

| FSA Category | No. of Premises | Frequency Required | Due 2023-24 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|---|-------------|
| A | 0 | Every 12 months | 0 |
| B | 192 | Every 24 months | 118 |
| C | 1329 | Alternative intervention or every 5 years | 122 |
| Awaiting Inspection* includes overdue | 39 | | 39 |
| Not in programme+ | 85 | | 0 |
| Total Inspections due as at 01/04/23 | | | 279 |

*As for FH above there is fluctuation in year as new premises register and are inspected which will affect the number of premises due for inspection in year compared to the start of the year. Last year there were 203 new food registrations throughout the year.

+ Includes premises undertaking very low risk activities e.g., selling pre-packed bars and providing teas and coffees, the requirement of which to continue to be registered will be assessed in line with current guidance.

3.24 There are no high-risk food standards inspections due in year. Food standards inspections will be completed when a food hygiene inspection is due to bring the intervention programme in line with the Food Law Code of Practice.

3.25 Interventions outside the inspection programme for Food Hygiene and Food Standards are intelligence led. This includes responding to the public and feedback from businesses and officers. The status of their registration will be reassessed this year in line with the current FSA guidance.

3.26 There is data available on the ethnicity of those living in Southend, this does not however reflect the number of people whose first language is not English. There is no information held on business owners, whose first language is not English. There is a translation service available which is available to inspectors to assist where business have difficulties in communicating in English.

3.27 Table 4 below details the number of approved food premises within the city.

Table 4: Approved Food Premises:

| Types | No. of each Type |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Cockle and / or Whelk Processing | 4 |
| Meat Products | 1 |
| Fishery Products / Cold Stores | 4 |

3.28 There are no registered feed importers in Southend. The food importers in Southend are mostly registered offices, operating as brokers, or small retailers importing a small range of low-risk foods. Southend has responsibilities as an inland authority as there are no border inspection posts in Southend, or inland transit sheds subject to customs controls.

- 3.29 The food and feed service will continue to support businesses to export product into the EU. Training and arrangements are in place to provide health certificates for businesses exporting to the EU. Fishing vessels have been inspected for compliance, and advice has been provided for businesses who were distributors and now have importer responsibilities.
- 3.30 There are still concerns regarding the harvesting of shellfish from the foreshore, therefore, the team have regulated the commercial harvesting of a number of legal pickers. The quantities being taken indicate commercial activity, and a risk with shellfish entering the food chain without the required controls in place.
- 3.31 Regulatory Services continues to respond to incidents of illegal shellfish harvesting, food fraud, with respect to counterfeit products, and to emerging PH issues.
- 3.32 Regulatory Services undertake sampling around the National Priorities identified in the FSA's Guidance on the food sampling programme. The programme also considers the sampling priorities for the Council and for the priorities identified through the Regional Strategic Assessment and the East of England Trading Standards Association (EETSA). There is no funding available for imported foods and no identified sampling programmes for feed this year. Where grants are available Regulatory Services will bid for relevant funding.

3.33 Seasonal Activities

3.34 Being a seaside location the service:

- Assists cockle and whelk producers during the harvesting season, which includes advisory visits and sampling and contributes to intelligence into the classification of production beds monitoring system.
- Monitors and disrupts the illegal harvesting of shellfish and supports legal harvesting.
- Supports the increased demand from higher visitor numbers from day trippers and those taking city breaks.
- Supports the City with reviewing and advising on food activities associated with events organised across the city. There were 110 events last year that would have required an evaluation of the food element.
- Provides of an export health certification process for local shellfish producers to enable local businesses to export into the EU.

3.35 Feed Premises Inspections:

- 3.36 There are national enforcement priorities for animal feed, with the inspections being co-ordinated through the National Trading Standards Board (NTSB) and the FSA. This approach is to ensure that regionally animal feed enforcement is effective, and there are risk-based controls in place across the Region.
- 3.37 From 1 April 2019, delivery of the NTSB Feed inspection programme, including the role of the lead Feed Officer role is contracted out to Essex Trading Standards to deliver the current NTSB funded programme.
- 3.38 The Council had 21 businesses registered under the Feed (Hygiene and Enforcement) Regulations 2005, for feed inspections as of the 1 April 2023. These are retail premises, which distribute food on for feed purposes, and one manufacturer of animal feedstuffs and 1 feed storage premises. Table 5 below highlights the Feed Premises Profile for 2023/24.

Table 5: Feed Premises Profile as at 2023/24.

| Category of Premises | No. |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Pet Food Manufacturers R06 | 1 |
| Supplier of Surplus Food R07 | 19 |
| Feed Storage Premises R09 | 1 |

| | |
|-------|----|
| Total | 21 |
|-------|----|

3.39 A Desktop Exercise for 2023-24 identified that there are two R07 feed inspections to be completed this year.

3.40 The feed service will support businesses to export production into the EU should they wish to do so.

3.41 Service Requests:

3.42 Regulatory Services will continue to respond to requests for service, including business advice, investigation and management of complaints, management of food incidents and hazards, including outbreaks of foodborne illness. The service will also prioritise requests from businesses to assist them with export requirements for food and feed.

3.43 Officers are located both in the main Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, and also undertake remote working. The service responds to inspections and incidents outside of normal hours, and the 24-hour contact centre receives emergency calls.

3.44 Demand on the service can vary according to both the season, and the weather, with high seasons or hot weather usually resulting in increased service requests.

3.45 Enforcement Policy

3.46 The Council's Environment and Regulatory Enforcement Policy was adopted by the Council in 2021. This policy was developed and consulted on meeting the requirements of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and the Regulator's Code.

4.0 Service Delivery

4.1 Interventions by Regulatory Services Officers for Food and Feeding stuffs.

4.2 Details of inspections due in each food category are in Tables 2 and Tables 3, and for feed in 3.39. Regulatory Services Officers will prioritise premises for food hygiene inspection in line with the Food Law Code of Practice and those assessed as being required for feed by NTSB.

For this Authority they are:

- Food hygiene inspections in line with risk and the frequency required by the Food Law Code of Practice.
- Visits to Approved food premises for conditional and full approval.
- Inspection of fishing vessels.
- All approved food premises that have been risk rated.
- All premises processing shellfish will be inspected annually at the start of the season, and other approved premises when due.
- Risk assessment of all new food business registering to determine intervention.
- Alternative intervention at low-risk premises.
- Feed interventions identified through the national enforcement priorities and co-ordinated by NTSB.

4.3 A food sampling programme Annex 2 will be delivered to supplement and inform the service. Delivery of the sampling programme will be reviewed in line with the priorities detailed above.

4.4 Regulatory Services Officers for food and feed are authorised in line with qualification and competency requirements detailed in the respective Codes of Practice. Co-ordination of food and feed is through the Lead Food and Feed Officers and the Regulatory Services Officer for Trading Standards.

4.5 Officers have access to expertise and peer support through attending local liaison group meetings, detailed in section 4.41, and suitably qualified and competent Enforcement Officers will support the service where the Code of Practice allows.

- 4.6 As detailed above, all high-risk food standards are prioritised for inspection each year. Due food standards inspections rated B and C will be inspected at the time the food hygiene inspection is due or overdue.
- 4.7 All new premises be inspected in year, however, where this is not possible those undertaking high risk activities will be prioritised over low-risk inspections.
- 4.8 With regards to home caterers, questionnaires continue to be used to determine the activities being undertaken, and subsequent inspections are prioritised where high risk activities are being undertaken. Many of this category of caterer register to enable them to benefit from the use the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS), rather than a legal requirement to do so. Inspections at premises undertaking lower risk activities will be carried out where resource is available.
- 4.9 Enforcement Officers will assist for any alternative interventions and sampling.
- 4.10 To assist Southend fishery businesses the service provides export health certificates, specifically to assist our businesses and for other food export certificates. There are five officers who have the necessary accreditation training to deliver this service.
- 4.11. Regulatory Services supports the Safety Advisory Group process for events to ensure that compliant caterers operate at these events. Caterers at these events will normally be required to be rated 3, 4 and 5 under the FHRS.
- 4.12 Where mobile traders are inspected at events or markets, the outcomes will be reported to their registered local authority in line with the FLCoP. Similarly reports from other local authorities regarding mobile traders registered with Southend-on-Sea City Council will be used to inform SCC ratings and interventions.
- 4.13 Regulatory Services Officers for food safety, standards and health and safety, will determine whether additional pro-active inspections need to be carried out at events based on intelligence.
- 4.14 The Council will continue to participate in the FHRS to promote transparency and enable individuals to make informed choices about where they eat. The team will continue to use and develop the Uniform database to improve reporting capability.
- 4.15 Regulatory Services Group Food and Feed Complaints**
- 4.16 Details of the demand on the service for food complaints in 2022-23 is in Section 9.1. It is anticipated that the number of complaints received in 2023-24 will be similar to those received in previous years.
- 4.17 There are very few complaints regarding feed, and the action required will be assessed by the lead for animal feed.
- 4.18 All food complaints will be allocated to officers with appropriate feed and food competencies. Investigations of service requests/complaints will be based on intelligence and will be proportionate to the risk.
- 4.19 Primary Authority Partnership and Home Authority Scheme**
- 4.20 The Council does not have any formal arrangements in place for food hygiene, standards or feeding stuffs. The Regulatory and Environment Enforcement Policy requires all Officers to consider any partnerships and formal intervention strategies prior to taking enforcement action. As part of an informal Home Authority arrangement this authority will continue to undertake sampling for examination of the cockle processing establishments in liaison with the City of London Corporation Port Health Authority.
- 4.21 All Officers have access to the Primary Authority Scheme website and will adhere to inspection plans or priorities identified through this scheme.

4.22 **Advice to Business**

- 4.23 The level of demand from businesses last year is included in section 6.1 but does not take account of advice given during inspection. Advice to businesses will be available to businesses under both the FHRs and the Regulators' Code to assist businesses to grow, and for those within the FHRs to achieve a higher rating.
- 4.24 Ad-hoc advice will be given on request and where necessary businesses will be advised of specialist support that they can obtain for themselves. Businesses have identified that information were to be produced in bite-size. Specific tailored advice is delivered as part of the inspection programme and will be reviewing with businesses their requirements,
- 4.25 Regulatory Services continues to support the Economic Development team (EDT) and Culture and Tourism by providing advice at events. The team will continue to support businesses through bringing attention to grants that are available for business development and energy efficiency.
- 4.26 Details of what to expect during an inspection are included on the reverse of the inspection report, which is left on site following an inspection, together with the officer's contact details. Advice is given to businesses on how to improve their food hygiene rating is also given on any further correspondence and includes the officer's contact details.

4.27 **Feed and Food Sampling**

- 4.28 The food sampling policy prioritisation is detailed in Section 3.32 and the food sampling programme for this year attached as Annex 2. Regulatory Services will continue to participate in the Essex Food Group programme as well as take samples to support local work. It is planned that sampling will be undertaken in accordance with the sampling plan (Annex 2). Enforcement Officers support this work.
- 4.29 There is no funding available for sampling of animal feed, or funding available this year from the FSA to support imported foods, (which is a national priority). The team has usually been successful when bidding for additional funding, where it is available. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) continues to provide a free allocation for microbiological sampling. Where resources allow, the team will participate in the East of England Trading Standards Association (EETSA) programme undertaking compositional food sampling and standards as well as taking samples in support of local work.
- 4.30 Samples for food examination, will be submitted to UKHSA Laboratory at Colindale; samples for food will be submitted to the Public Analyst Scientific Services Limited. The nominated Agricultural Analyst for feed is the same as Essex Trading Standards (ETS). This is to reduce the cost of transport of samples to the laboratory. The details for the returns of any sampling information will be provided to the Food Standards Agency, as required.

4.31 **Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease**

- 4.32 The team responds to notifications of infectious disease associated with gastrointestinal infections from UKHSA and from the local pathology laboratory. The goal is to identify potential sources of infection and to stop further communicable transmission within the community.
- 4.33 There are procedures that detail the range of interventions that can be taken and the team have a range of responses such as guidance, exclusion criteria and microbiological clearance. Where necessary the team offer advice and regularly liaise with the Essex Health Protection Group involving Consultants in Communication Disease Control (CCDC), epidemiologists and other Environmental Health teams across the region.
- 4.34 SARS-COVID-2 continues to be a notifiable disease however Regulatory Services will only respond to specific requests from UKHSA where actions are required to be taken to protect public health.

4.35 **Incidents**

- 4.36 The team will review all food alerts and will respond where relevant or directed by the FSA or DEFRA. The demand for responses will usually be included within the resource allocated to the food service, but dependent on the demand may result in a reduction in the pro-active service.
- 4.37 Resource may be necessary to support the Council's emergency control plan. All additional resource requirements will be requested through the relevant Gold and Silver Command Groups.
- 4.38 Regulatory Services continues to respond to incidents of illegal harvesting of shellfish from the foreshore. These products are removed from the food chain where commercial harvesters have been unable to demonstrate that the shellfish will be subject to the correct controls. The team is currently working with the National Food Crime Unit (FSA) and other agencies.

4.39 **Liaison with Other Organisations**

- 4.40 The Council will continue to participate locally in liaison arrangements with:
- The Essex Food Liaison Group (including microbiological sampling).
 - East of England Trading Standards Association (EETSA) Food Group.
 - EETSA Feed Group.
 - Southeast Shellfish Liaison Group.
 - Food Hygiene Focus Group.
 - Essex Environmental Health Managers Group.
 - EETSA Heads of Service.
 - UKHSA.
 - NTSB.
 - Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority.
 - City of London Port Health Authority.
 - Town Centre and Marine Units of Essex Police; and
 - Planning.
- 4.41 The Council will work with national bodies as appropriate, including the FSA, Chartered Trading Standards Institute, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Local Government Association and Justice and Care Organisation.
- 4.42 **Promotional Work and other non-official controls interventions for food and feed**
- 4.43 Participation will be as part of a larger exercise organised nationally or through Essex County and will be prioritised in line with corporate objectives.
- 4.44 The team continues to work with the Public Health Team and other colleagues to create and implement a plan for the food environment in Southend. It remains clear that substantial changes are required to diets over the next few decades to meet existing government targets of reducing high fat, salt, and sugar consumption.
- 4.45 An integrated approach to improving health is required in order to achieve better health outcomes and will incorporate tackling the current fast-food environment whilst providing support to people to make healthier choices. With this in mind, this plan also delivers to the Council's objectives on the healthy eating strategy, and the improved health outcomes for residents, visitors and those working in Southend.
- 4.46 The team is currently involved with the relaunch of the Southend Supports Breastfeeding campaign and is working on providing advice to event organisers in Southend on sustainability.

4.47 The Team provides intelligence to the Intelligence Database (IDB) and directly to the National Food Crime Unit and the Gangmasters Labour Abuse Agency.

4.48 Regulatory Services will also participate in:

- Health Promotion Events organised by SCC.
- Targeted events.
- Southend Action Days, targeted activity in specific areas
- Social media messaging through Facebook and twitter

4.49 The Council has continued to use social media through a Facebook page to inform business of emerging issues, including reinforcing the FHRS; publicising campaigns and informing members of where a business achieves a five under that scheme.

4.50 The team uses resources to support leisure events across the town, though participating on the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) and inspecting at events previously identified as higher risk.

5.0 Resources

5.1 Financial Allocation

5.2 Table 6 below highlights the financial allocation associated with the plan.

Table 6 financial allocation

| | £ Budget 2023-24 |
|---|---|
| Travel and Subsistence | 1,250 |
| Equipment | 0 (there would be budget available if required) |
| IT & Legal (included in management, administration, and technical services) | 18,800 |
| ¹ Sampling Budget | 0 (funding stream from grants where available and would be available if required) |
| *Staffing Costs | 390,000 |
| **Contracted food hygiene and standards inspections | 11,800 |
| Contracted animal feed inspections | 525 |
| Total | 421,850 (Excluding animal feed) |

⁽¹⁾Microbiological samples are included as part of our free allocation with UKHSA.)

*Includes calculations of on-costs as amended 2023-24

**Underspend on vacant posts to be used to complete food hygiene and standards activities.

5.3 Staffing Allocation

5.4 Table 7 highlights the staffing allocation over time, and Table 8 in section 5.8 highlights the staffing allocation necessary to deliver this plan.

Table 7 Staffing Allocation over Time

| Staff | FTE 2020-21 | FTE 2021-22 | FTE 2022-23 | FTE 2023-24 |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Management Food and Feed | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Regulatory Services Officers Food* vacancy factor used for Contracted inspections | 1.8 | 2.0 | 2.2 | 3 |
| Enforcement Officers Food | 0.6 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 0.5 |
| Contracted food inspections | 0.8 | 1.6 | 1.2 | 0.6 |
| Total Officers | 3.7 | 5.1 | 4.6 | 4.6 |
| Administration | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Regulatory Services Officers Feed | Contracted out service | Contracted out service | Contracted out service | Contracted out service |
| Total FTE | 4.3 | 5.7 | 5.1 | 5.1 |

5.5 Staff Development Plan

5.6 Training will be identified as part of the annual conversations with staff members to meet the needs of the service to be delivered. Registered Environmental Health Practitioners are responsible for managing their own CPD training which funded by the Council.

5.7 Continued assessment of competencies in line with the Code of Practice is undertaken as part of the Council's appraisal system, Officers who support areas of food, feed, infectious disease, and legal processes will receive appropriate training which will be provided both in-house and externally as appropriate, and Officers working to complete their registration as food practitioners will be supported.

5.8 Table 8 shows the projected resource required to deliver programme.

Table 8 projected resource required to deliver programme.

| Activity (does not include Business Support time) | FTE |
|---|-------------|
| Food Hygiene & Standards Inspections | 1.94 |
| Approved Premises | 0.04 |
| Revisits to check compliance / FHRS | 0.6 |
| Service Requests | 0.33 |
| Events applications | 0.17 |
| HA / Primary Authority | 0.02 |
| Advice to premises | 0.08 |
| Formal action | 0.12 |
| Co-ordination liaison | 0.11 |
| Promotional / Facebook / FHRS | 0.12 |
| Sampling activities | 0.21 |
| Food poisoning (does not consider outbreak) | 0.11 |
| Incidents (including illegal harvesting of shellfish) | 0.5 |
| Training for competency (Code of Practice requirement) & internal | 0.3 |
| Auditing | 0.15 |
| Management of activities (service and improvements) | 0.48 |
| Administration | 0.5 |
| Total Food (including dedicated administration) | 5.78 |
| All Feed Activities | 0.1 |
| Total FTE | 5.88 |

5.9 There is a contract in place to undertake food inspections to assist with meeting the Food Law Code of Practice requirements, to ensure that high risk interventions are completed in

year. However, Table 7 and 8 demonstrate that there is a 0.68 FTE deficit between current resources and the number required to deliver the programme. This deficit is covered by utilising underspend in salaries across Regulatory Services to bring in additional contractors, to meet the inspection programme.

6.0 Quality Assessment

6.1 Quality Assessment and Internal Monitoring

6.2 A comprehensive audit of data entering by the business support and officers was undertaken this year. It identified key areas of control to be implemented, and new processes have been developed along with associated training. New reports are available to identify errors going forward.

6.3 The team participate in the consistency exercises that are organised by the FSA, and to improve consistency further share these results at the Essex Food Liaison Group.

6.4 There is performance monitoring in place which is reported monthly to the Director of Public Protection.

7.0 Review

7.1 Review against the Service Plan 2022-23

7.2 There is continued support for report writing and there are a range of performance reports available.

7.3. Table 9 shows the Inspections Under the Food Safety Recovery Plan 2022-23

Table 9 Inspections completed 2022-23.

| FSA Category | Numbers Due | Achieved |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| A | 8 | 100% |
| B | 36 | 100% |
| C | 205 | 98% (4 closed as seasonal) |
| D | 5 | 100% |
| E | 0 | 100 Due or Overdue Inspections |
| Unrated assessed for prioritisation | 384 | 100% assessed. 198* completed 93% inspected |

*The deviation from those due is because on inspection they either did not open or closed shortly after opening.

7.4 The service fully complied with the FSA recovery plan for food hygiene inspections, and undertook additional inspections, which were due in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice, but not required in year. The team also fully supported all premises which were exporting to the EU, and this included the additional responsibility of inspecting fishing vessels that registered to the Council.

7.5 The FSA recovery plan only required A rated risk food standards inspections to be completed. There were none due, the team did complete 50 B risk rated and 439 C risk rated food standards inspections.

7.6 The Assistant Regulatory Services Officer completed their training route and achieved full competency for food interventions.

7.7 To cover for the officer who was seconded to public health, additional inspections were contracted to assist with the priorities of the inspection programme.

7.8 Table 10 presents the Feed Premises Profile for the 2022-23 inspection programme, in line with the desk-top study.

Table 10 Feed Premises Profile Inspection Programme

| Category | No. In category | Due 2022-23 | Completed | % Achieved |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| R7 | 19 | 2 | 2 | 100 |
| R6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| R5 ¹ | 1 | 0 | 0 | |

7.9 To reduce the cost to the authority of the time element of the training and enforcement for feed, this part of the service has been contracted out to Essex Trading Standards.

8.0 Enforcement

8.1 Table 11 below highlights the enforcement undertaken in Food Premises.

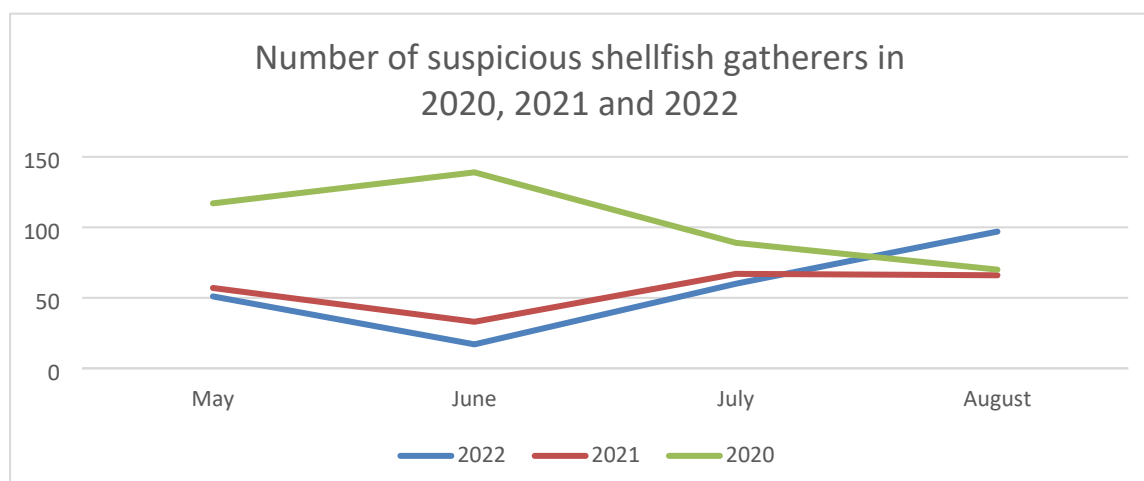
Table 11 Enforcement undertaken in Food Premises

| | 2022-23 | 2021-22 | 2020-21 | 2019-20 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <i>Prosecutions</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Simple Cautions</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Improvement Notices</i> | 9 | 2 | 0 | 5 |
| <i>Prohibitions & Voluntary Closures</i> | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| <i>Seizure and Detentions (including voluntary surrender)</i> | 4 | 18 | 51 | 47 |
| <i>Remedial Action and detention notices</i> | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 18 | 21 | 52 | 52 |

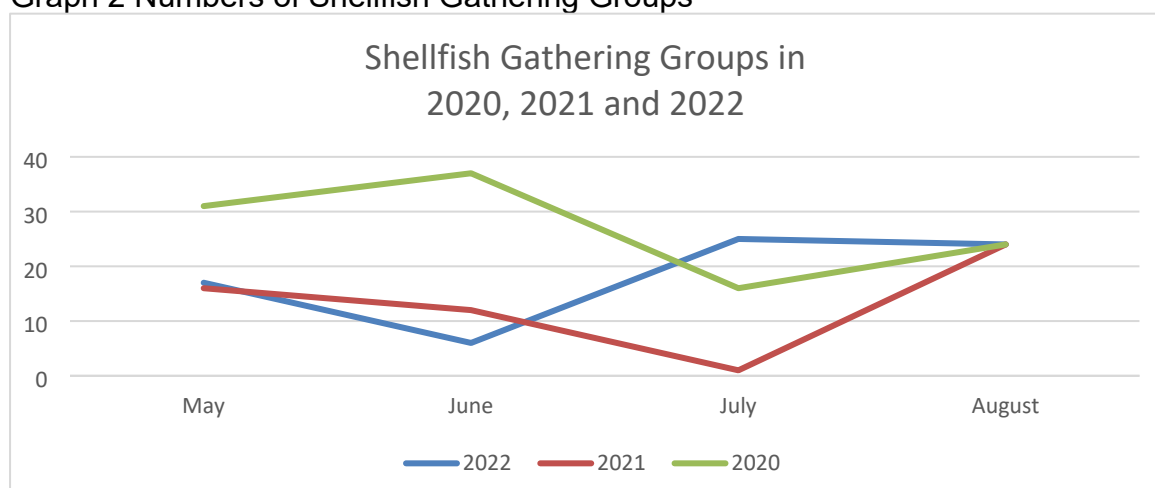
There has been an increase in the number of improvement notices served to remedy non-compliance. The reduction in seizures and detention is attributable to the effectiveness of the continued disruption to the illegal oyster harvesting.

8.2 Enforcement relating to Illegal shellfish harvesting.

Graph 1 Numbers of Shellfish Gatherers



Graph 2 Numbers of Shellfish Gathering Groups



- 8.3 Both the numbers of individuals and groups believed to be illegally harvesting shellfish has declined since 2020, with the shellfish gathering activities periods in Southend foreshore between May and August.
- 8.4 The high visibility overt surveillance approach in 2021 and 2022 saw a significant reduction of suspicious shellfish gathering activities along Southend foreshore from 2020 figures, and it is planned that this continued disruption approach continues.
- 8.5 The team continues to work collaboratively with partners, these include: the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities, the town centre and marine units of Essex Police, and the charity Justice and Care.

9.0 Service Requests

- 9.1 Table 13 highlights the service requests for food safety and standards and infectious disease investigations over the last 4 years.

Table 13 Service Requests for Food Safety and Standards, and Infectious Disease Investigations and Covid interventions

| | 2022-23 | 2021-22 | 2020-21 | 2019-20 |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| <i>Food Safety and Standards</i> | 158 | 423 | 596 | 535 |
| <i>Infectious Disease</i> | 187 | 196 | 137 | 266 |
| <i>Covid interventions</i> | 0 | 130 | 891 | 0 |
| Total | 345 | 749 | 1624 | 799 |

- 9.2 The number of service requests have reduced, this is attributable to the Food Standards Agency closing their referral service. This service had previously placed demand on the service for anonymous and complaints found to be unsubstantiated. As expected, there were no Covid interventions required, this will be removed from reporting next year.
- 9.3 Table 14 highlights the numbers of samples taken.

Table 14: Sampling

| | 2022-23 | 2021-22 | 2020-21 | 2019-20 |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <i>Microbiological Samples Taken</i> | 199 | 192 | 111 | 210 |
| <i>Analytical Samples Taken</i> | 12 | 30 | 25 | 42 |

9.4 The FSA funded an EU imported food sampling project which was completed. There were no samples required for feed analysis in 2022-23.

10.0 **Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan 2022-23**

10.1 The FSA recovery plan priorities were completed, and that plan focussed on the priorities identified by the FSA.

10.2 A sampling grant for sampling imported foods became available in-year, and a successful grant application was made. 12 samples were taken by officers in line with the FSA priorities. However, the plan to explore the use of alternative enforcements and the use of Uniform to reschedule the next intervention was not achieved and has been rescheduled to this year.

10.3 Additional resource was required by officers to correct inputting errors of administrators.

10.4 **Areas for Improvement**

10.5 The following areas of improvement have been identified:

- Continue to enhance and develop the functionality of the Uniform database.
- Continued improvement of remote working facilities to integrate paperwork for inspections.
- Improved reporting tools for performance management purposes.
- Standardising work where possible and process improvements.
- Continue to review and prioritise for inspection new premises where risk identified.
- Training of Officers to support work areas and identified competency requirements.
- Explore the use of the alternative enforcement visits and reschedule for the next intervention in line with the Food Law Code of Practice. A process will be developed and ensure the mapping in Uniform reflects this. This will coincide with the revised Food Law Code of Practice, when issued.
- Work with businesses to identify service and advice needs, including the production of a newsletter with bite-size updates.
- Improve process compliance of administration staff.

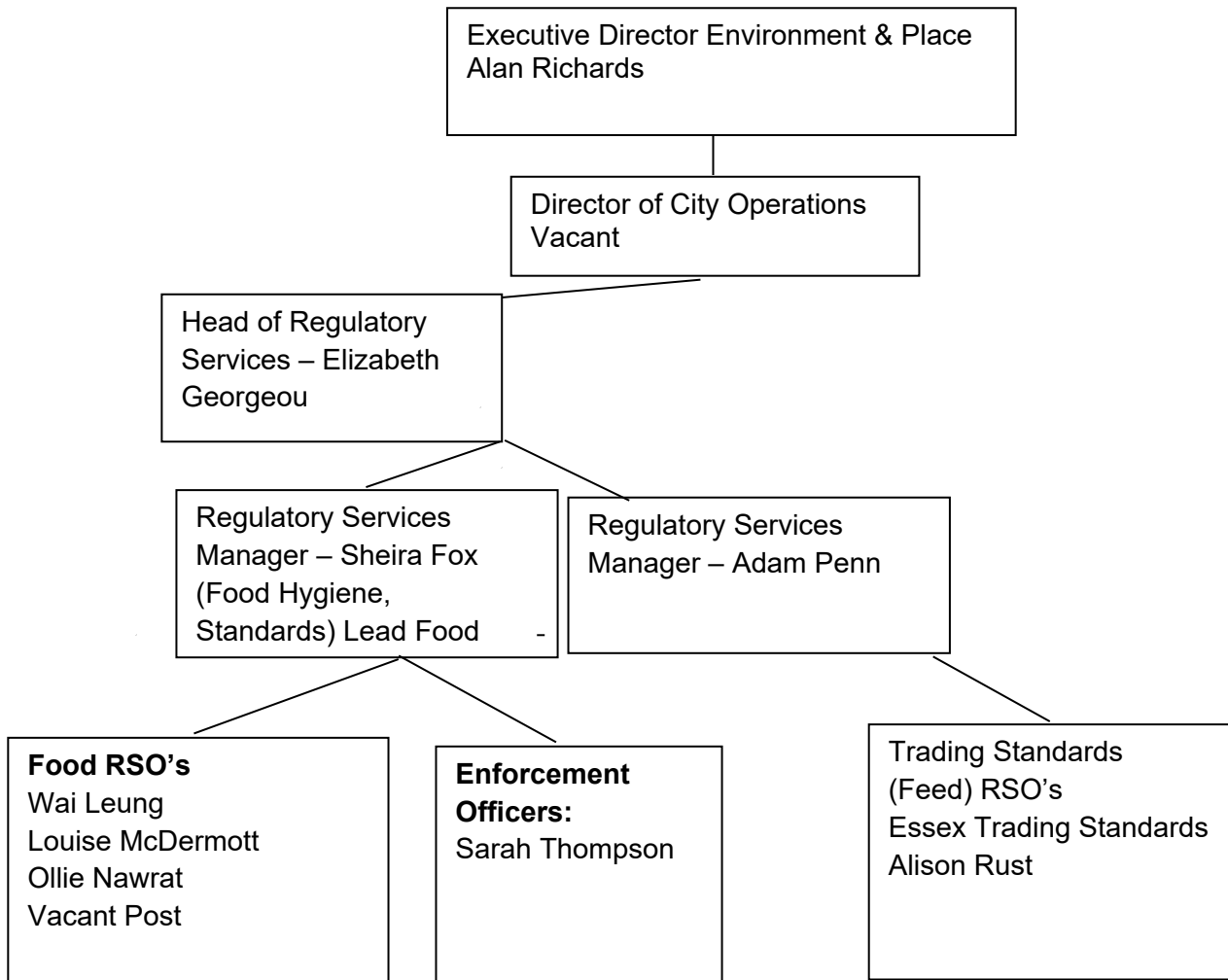
Annex 1

Leader and Cabinet Portfolio for Regulatory Services:

Leader Cllr Tony Cox

Public Protection: Cllr John Lamb

Food Service – Officers undertaking food work only:



**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL
SAMPLING PROGRAMME; 1 April 2023– 31 March 2024**

Sampling is also undertaken on a monthly basis between June and October (depending on start and end of cockle season) from the cockle sheds.

| Week | Date | Sampling Projects 2023-24 |
|------|------------|---|
| 1 | 19/04/2023 | In house Scooped and machine ice cream |
| 2 | 03/05/2023 | In house Scooped and machine ice cream |
| 3 | 17/05/2023 | National Vegetarian Week - In house Homemade coleslaw/ Study 77 RTE salad |
| 4 | 31/05/2023 | Study 77 RTE salad/ Study 78 Swabbing - kebab shops, Fast food takeaways |
| 5 | 14/06/2023 | Study 77 RTE salad/ Study 78 Swabbing - kebab shops, Fast food takeaways |
| 6 | 28/06/2023 | Study 77 RTE salad/ Study 78 Swabbing - kebab shops, Fast food takeaways |
| 7 | 12/07/2023 | In house Loose ready to eat seafoods |
| 8 | 26/07/2023 | In house Loose ready to eat seafoods |
| 9 | 09/08/2023 | In house Made to order sandwiches - chicken, eggs, sliced ham fillings |
| 10 | 23/08/2023 | In house Made to order sandwiches - chicken, eggs, sliced ham fillings |
| 11 | 06/09/2023 | In house Made to order sandwiches - chicken, eggs, sliced ham fillings |
| 12 | 20/09/2023 | In house Community Fridges/ Soup kitchen |
| 13 | 04/10/2023 | In house Community Fridges/ Soup kitchen |
| 14 | 18/10/2023 | In house Vegan food/Listeria Shopping Basket/ Budget branded Ready to eat foods (Supermarket chains) |
| 15 | 01/11/2023 | World Vegan Day/In house Listeria Shopping Basket/ Budget branded Ready to eat foods (Supermarket chains) |
| 16 | 15/11/2023 | In house Cakes from European shops |
| 17 | 29/11/2023 | International Cake Day - In house cakes from European shops |
| 18 | 13/12/2023 | In house Christmas theme foods - nuts, dried dates, chocolate coated products |

| | | |
|----|------------|--|
| 19 | 27/12/2023 | NO SAMPLING ACTIVITY |
| 20 | 10/01/2024 | In house Independent Grocers - biltong, pork cracklings, sandwiches, soft cheese etc |
| 21 | 24/01/2024 | In house Independent Grocers - biltong, pork cracklings, sandwiches, soft cheese etc |

Equality Analysis

| | |
|--|---|
| Name of policy, service function, or restructure requiring an Equality Analysis | Official Feed and Food Service Plan 2023-24 |
| Department | Neighbourhoods and Environment |
| Service Area | Regulatory Services |
| Date Equality Analysis Undertaken | 11 May 2023 |
| To be reviewed every: | Annual plan – on each plan |

1. Names and roles of staff carrying out this Equality Analysis (EA):

| Name | Role | Service Area |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Elizabeth Georgeou | Head of Regulatory Services | Regulatory Services |
| Sheira Fox | Regulatory Services Manager | Regulatory Services |

2. Evidence Base

2.1 Sources of information

Please list the sources of information, including data, and results of consultation exercises, that could or will inform the EA.

Table 1

| Source of information | Reason for using (e.g., likely impact on a particular group). |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Southend insights – Age Structure | Those in the higher age bracket and lower age brackets would be considered vulnerable with respect to risks from foodborne disease. |
| Southend insights – religion | Requirement to regulate foods which are not consumed on religious grounds |
| Uniform database | Provides details of the types of businesses inspected, the level of compliance and business types. |

2.2 Gaps in information or data

Are there any information gaps and data? Do the gaps relate to any protected characteristics?

Describe the gap(s) and the impact this has on your ability to complete the EA.

Businesses, through the economic development team, have identified a need for bite-size information to be available from regulators. The service is currently developing an e-resource that will provide this information and request feedback from businesses to ensure that the service responds to those needs.

3. Carrying out your analysis

3.1 Impact assessment

The Council is legally required to produce an annual food service plan, it sets out aims and objectives with respect to food safety, standards and animal feed. It reviews performance over the previous year and how it will deliver the service for the year ahead.

Central government requires the local authority to comply with the relevant codes of practice, legislation, government priorities and the FSA framework agreement. This plan is supplementary to the Regulatory Services service plan.

The plan details how the service will comply with the above in the forthcoming year. It also details the feed programme as developed by the National Trading Standards Board.

Table 2

| | Impact - Please tick | | | | |
|--|----------------------|----------|---------|----|---------|
| | Yes | | | No | Unclear |
| | Positive | Negative | Neutral | | |
| Age (including looked after children) | Y | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|
| Disability | | | Y | | |
| Gender Reassignment | | | Y | | |
| Marriage and civil partnership | | | Y | | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | Y | | | | |
| Race | Y | | | | |
| Religion or belief | Y | | | | |
| Sex | | | Y | | |
| Sexual orientation | | | Y | | |
| Carers | | | Y | | |
| Socio-economic | Y | | | | |

3.2 Results of your analysis

Table 3

| | Potential Impact |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Age | Those over 65+ and less than 4 years are more vulnerable to foodborne disease. The proper regulation of high-risk premises protects those individuals. |
| Disability | None identified |
| Gender reassignment | None identified |
| Marriage and civil partnership | None Identified |
| Pregnancy and maternity | Pregnant woman are more susceptible |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Race | Language and literacy may add to the challenges of compliance but some individuals. There is translated information and a translation service available. |
| Religion or belief | Officers have a wide knowledge of diverse cultures through their formal training. They have the knowledge of slaughterhouse rituals and types of foods consumed by different groups. |
| Sex | None identified |
| Sexual orientation | None identified |
| Carers | None identified |
| Socio-economic | Included in the inspection programme are food banks and other premises serving low-income groups or those otherwise under financial pressure in the current economic climate to ensure that food is safe and what it says it is. |

4. Community Impact

You may also need to undertake an analysis of the potential direct or indirect impact on the wider community when introducing a new/revised policy, service function or restructure. The template is [here](#).

None

5. Equality Analysis Action Plan

Table 4

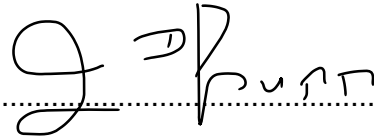
| Planned action | Objective | Who | When | How will this be monitored (e.g., via team/service plans) |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------|-------------|--|
|-----------------------|------------------|------------|-------------|--|

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---------------|-------------|--|
| Update bulletins | To better understand needs of businesses | Food officers | On start up | System collates information sent out and responses made |
|-------------------------|--|---------------|-------------|--|

The conclusions of this Equality Assessment will be embedded in future decision making



Signed (lead officer):



Signed (Executive Director/Head of Service):

Once signed, please send a copy of the completed EA (and, if applicable, CCIA)

to Angela Dress Angeladress@southend.gov.uk.

All Equality Analyses are recorded on Pentana and reported to CMT and DMT's on a quarterly basis.

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| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Meeting: | Place Scrutiny Committee, People Scrutiny Committee and Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee |
| Date: | 10 th , 11 th and 12 th July 2023 |
| Classification: | Part 1 |
| Key Decision: | No |
| Title of Report: | In-Depth Scrutiny Projects 2022/23 and 2023/24 |
| Report Author: | T Row & S Cox (Principal Democratic Services Officers) |
| Executive Director | Joe Chesterton (Executive Director – Finance & Resources) |

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the draft report and recommendations of the In-Depth Scrutiny Project undertaken on behalf of the Committee for 2022/2.
- 1.2 For the Committee to consider a possible approach to in-depth scrutiny activity for 2023/24.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the report and recommendations arising from the In-Depth Scrutiny Project for 2022/23, detailed at Section 6 of the attached report, be agreed.**
- 2.2 **That the Chair of the Project Team for the In-Depth Scrutiny Project (Councillor K Buck) present the report and recommendations of the scrutiny project to a future meeting of the Cabinet.**
- 2.3 **That the Committee consider the proposed approach to in-depth scrutiny activity for 2023/24, as set out in this report.**
- 2.4 **That, subject to the agreement of the proposed approach to in-depth scrutiny activity for 2023/24, no other topic(s) be selected by the Committee for additional in-depth scrutiny during the year.**

3. In-Depth Scrutiny Project 2022/23 - Report and Recommendations

- 3.1 At its meeting on 4 July 2022, the Committee agreed that an In-Depth Scrutiny Project be undertaken during the 2022/23 municipal year on the theme of 'Preparing Southend for the Electric Vehicle Revolution', as part of the scrutiny work programme for the year (Minute 86 refers).

- 3.2 The Project Team for the In-Depth Scrutiny Project comprised the following members appointed by the Council on 19 May 2022:
- 3.3 Councillors: M Berry, K Buck, J Courtenay, M Dent, A Jones, N Ward, J Warren and P Wexham.
- 3.4 Councillor Buck was appointed Chair of the Project Team from January 2023. The Project Team was supported by relevant officers including J Burr (Executive Director (Neighbourhoods & Environment)) and T Row (Principal Democratic Services Officer/Project Co-ordinator). Other officer support was provided in respect of specific elements of the in-depth scrutiny project.
- 3.5 Progress with regard to the joint in-depth scrutiny project was achieved throughout the 2022/23 municipal year. Efforts were made by the Project Team to ensure that the timescale for the delivery of the project was maintained and that the project was completed by the end of the 2022/23 municipal year.
- 3.6 The final report arising from the In-Depth Scrutiny Project is attached as Appendix 1 and the recommendations of the Project Team are set out in Section 6 of the report. These have been agreed by the Project Team. A number of the recommendations arising from the in-depth scrutiny project have budget implications that will require consideration as part of current and future years' budget processes prior to implementation.
- 3.7 The Committee is recommended to endorse the recommendations of the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project, for consideration by the Cabinet.
- 3.8 The report and recommendations arising from the completion of the In-Depth Scrutiny Project will be presented to the Committee by Councillor K Buck, as Chair of the Project Team.
- 3.9 In accordance with Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10 (Part 4 (e) of the Constitution), the report and recommendations of an In-Depth Scrutiny Project would normally be presented to the Cabinet by the chair of the relevant scrutiny committee. As the scrutiny project for 2022/23 has been undertaken on behalf of each the Committee, it is suggested that the report and recommendations arising from the project should be presented to the Cabinet by Cllr K Buck as Chair of the Project Team that led the project.

4. In-Depth Scrutiny Project 2023/24

- 4.1 As Councillors will be aware, each of the scrutiny committees has traditionally undertaken an in-depth scrutiny project each year. The scrutiny projects are selected at the beginning of each municipal year and have generally been focussed on the Council's corporate priorities or matters of local concern. Recent in-depth scrutiny projects have also been aligned with the ambition and outcomes arising from the Southend 2050 programme. Details of the in-

depth scrutiny projects previously undertaken by the scrutiny committees are attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

- 4.2 The delivery of the in-depth scrutiny projects informs the development of a report and recommendations which advise the Executive and the Council on its policies, budget provision and service delivery in specific areas. Each project is driven through a member Project Team, supported by relevant officers. Participation in the in-depth scrutiny projects enables councillors to be actively involved in a particular topic and to influence and shape proposals around improvement that will result in benefits and outcomes for residents and service users.
- 4.3 The undertaking of the annual in-depth scrutiny projects is not a statutory requirement and is derived from the power set out in Section 9(c) (Policy Review and Development) of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules at Part 4(e) of the Council's Constitution, which provides that the scrutiny committees may hold enquiries and investigate options for future direction in policy development.
- 4.4 The undertaking of individual in-depth scrutiny projects for each scrutiny committee can be resource intensive. Each Project Team must be fully supported throughout the scoping, delivery and outcome reporting of the project and appropriate specialist capacity is often required to facilitate aspects of projects. In addition, it has regularly been necessary to arrange and undertake appropriate site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, and commission research etc. to inform the delivery of in-depth scrutiny projects.
- 4.5 The Scrutiny Chairs Forum met on 27 June 2023. The Membership of this forum is constituted from the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of each of the Council's three scrutiny committees.
- 4.6 It was felt by those present at the Scrutiny Chairs Forum that the focus for 2023/24 should be to embed pre-Cabinet Scrutiny processes, focus on effective work programming and direct resources to shorter Task and Finish reviews to drive specific areas of concern forward.
- 4.7 At this meeting, the membership and representation on Outside Bodies was identified as a potential first topic for a Task and Finish review, subject to agreement by Scrutiny.
- 4.8 This would allow further time to add topics of concern to the Scrutiny work programme, clarify the shortlisting process and allow the opportunity of establishing further Task and Finish Groups further in the year to undertake shorter and more focussed scrutiny work if Members wished.
- 4.9 It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the proposed approach to the set out above, that no additional topic(s) be selected by the Committee for in-depth scrutiny activity during the year 2023/24.

5 Corporate Implications

Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

Becoming an excellent and high performing organisation.

Financial Implications

There are costs associated with organising in-depth projects relating to officer time, but this will all be contained within existing resources.

Legal Implications

None

People Implications

None.

Property Implications

None

Consultation

As described in report.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

None

Risk Assessment

None

6. Background Papers

None

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Final report of In-Depth Scrutiny Project 2022/23

Appendix 2 - Previous In-Depth Scrutiny Projects

Place Scrutiny Committee

**In-Depth Scrutiny Project
2022/23**

**‘Preparing Southend for
the Electric Vehicle
Revolution’**

Final Report and Recommendations (July 2023)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 I am pleased to be able to present this report and recommendations of the in-depth scrutiny project for 2022/23.
- 1.2 Electric vehicles and the reduction of the use of fossil fuelled vehicles is something that I am particularly passionate about. This project was an important piece of work not solely because of the Government's ambition to end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030, with all new cars and vans being fully zero emission from 2035 and the continued usage on fossil fuels but also to improve the air quality and environment within the City and removing barriers to potential EV ownership where residents may be unable to install their own charging units.
- 1.3 In undertaking this work, the Project Team was conscious that the Council needed to identify some solutions to kick start the preparations for the EV revolution in Southend and reduce the barriers for increasing electric vehicle usage. This will help identify the right technology, the necessary infrastructure and appropriate solutions.
- 1.4 I would like to thank everyone involved for their contribution to the in-depth scrutiny project, including Shirley Long at the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and representatives from both companies who kindly gave their time to share their expertise and experiences to inform our work.
- 1.5 Finally, I would like to thank officers of the Democratic Services Section for their assistance and support during the course of the in-depth scrutiny project and in the production of this final report.



Councillor Kevin Buck
Chair of the In-Depth Scrutiny Project Team

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each of the Council's scrutiny committees (the People Scrutiny Committee, the Place Scrutiny Committee and the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee) has traditionally undertaken an in-depth scrutiny project each year. The in-depth projects are selected at the beginning of each municipal year and generally focus on the Council's corporate priorities or matters of local concern. Recent in-depth scrutiny projects have also been aligned with the ambition and outcomes arising from the Southend 2050 programme.
- 2.2 The in-depth scrutiny projects lead to the development of reports and recommendations which advise the Executive and the Council on its policies, budget provision and service

delivery. Participation in the in-depth projects enable councillors to be actively involved in a specific topic and to influence and shape proposals around service improvement that will result in improved outcomes.

3. FRAMEWORK OF THE IN-DEPTH SCRUTINY PROJECT

3.1 At its meeting in July 2022, the Place Scrutiny Committee agreed that an in-depth scrutiny project be undertaken during the 2022/23 municipal year on the theme of 'Preparing Southend for the Electric Vehicle Revolution', as part of the scrutiny work programme for the year.

3.2 There were a number of reasons for the identification of the in-depth scrutiny project. In particular, the project aimed to bring Southend into the 21st Century in preparation for the increased use and ownership of electric vehicles, ensuring appropriate infrastructure would be available given the Government's plan end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030, with all new cars and vans being fully zero emission from 2035.

From the outset of the study, it was felt that the focus should be on on-street charging facilities, particularly given the complexities enabling charging facilities in densely urbanised areas with streets which have limited or no off-street parking suitable for private home chargers and very high levels of on street parking.

3.3 The agreed scope of the in-depth scrutiny project was:

- (a) To review and develop the vision proposed in the Southend City Council Electric Vehicle (SCC EV) Feasibility Study in particular the provision of chargers in residential areas.
- (b) To identify and develop an appropriate timeline for the introduction of any proposals.
- (c) To identify an appropriate revenue model which will realise short and medium-term benefits for the City.

3.4 The review was set within the context of the Council's 2050 ambition and priorities and the Project Team was tasked with reviewing relevant issues and to report back to the Cabinet with appropriate findings and recommendations.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The review was undertaken on behalf of the Place Scrutiny Committee by a Project Team comprising the following members appointed by the Council on 19 May 2022:

Councillors M Berry, K Buck, J Courtenay, M Dent, A Jones, N Ward, J Warren and P Wexham

4.2 Councillor K Buck was appointed Chair of the Project Team at its initial project scoping meeting held on 16 November 2022.

4.3 The Project Team was supported by relevant officers including J Burr (Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment)) and T Row (Principal Democratic Services Officer/Project Co-ordinator). Other officer support was provided in respect of specific elements of the in-depth scrutiny project, including:

N Hoskins (Head of Civil Engineering)
J Gay (Interim Head of Waste and Climate Change)

- 4.4 The Project Team met on three occasions between September 2022 and March 2023. Efforts were made by the Project Team to ensure that the timescale for the delivery of the project was maintained and that the project was completed within the 2022/23 municipal year.
- 4.5 The in-depth scrutiny project was undertaken using an evidence-based approach to the consideration of existing governance and joint working arrangements, through a mixture of experiences presented by councillors and informative presentations that supported the understanding of the barriers, challenges, opportunities and aspirations of the issues involved. One witness session was held in respect of the project, where an officer with significant experience in the matter within a number of London Boroughs and two commercial companies presented to the Project Team.
- 4.6 A project plan and work programme for the in-depth scrutiny project was adopted by the Project Team in November 2022, having been agreed by the Place Scrutiny Committee in October 2022. The project plan and work programme set out the scope and framework for the project, alongside a programme of thematic evidence-gathering activities around the following specific areas identified as key to the desired outcomes for the project:
- (a) The context and expectations of the in-depth scrutiny project.
 - (b) The current provision of charging facilities in the City.
 - (c) The barriers to and opportunities for charging facilities in densely urbanised areas and potential options.
 - (d) The experiences from other local authorities on providing such infrastructure
 - (e) What eligible local authorities need to do to apply for appropriate funding sources such as LEVI electric chargepoint infrastructure funding and the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) 'on-street residential chargepoint scheme' (ORCS)
- 4.7 The following sources of evidence were considered as part of the in-depth scrutiny project:
- (a) Overview of challenges and opportunities for increased EV charging infrastructure in Southend-on-Sea – July 2022
 - (b) Relevant strategies, surveys, data, documents, reports and plans.
 - (c) Feedback from providers and other local authorities
 - (d) Government guidance

5. CONTEXT AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE IN-DEPTH SCRUTINY PROJECT

- 5.1 From the outset of the study, the Project Team was mindful of the Council's ambition to become a Green City, with low-emission transport a key focus in the City Council's sustainability reporting. The Council had also declared a Climate Emergency on 18 July, 2019, and announced a commitment to achieving carbon neutrality in their operations by 2030 (or before), as well as supporting the wider City to achieve net zero by the same date. To assist in achieving this target, several strategy documents and enabling policies had been produced including:
- (i) Supplementary Planning Document regarding Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure for new development.
 - (ii) A Feasibility Study regarding charging infrastructure by Net Zero East entitled "Overview of challenges and opportunities for increased EV charging infrastructure in Southend-on-Sea".

It was also mindful that there were two Air Quality Management Areas covering sections of the A127, which currently exceed national air quality goals.

- 5.2 The Project Team had regard to the Government's Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy, published in March 2022, which summarised the need for a particular focus on chargepoint infrastructure:

"We expect around 300,000 public chargers as a minimum by 2030. Our goal is to ensure these chargepoints are installed ahead of demand, inspiring confidence in drivers who have not yet made the switch."

This equates to between approximately 250-260 public chargers in Southend by 2030.

- 5.3 The Project Team noted the level existing provision of charging infrastructure within its car parks and other facilities. Public electric vehicle charging points across Southend were limited and most were centred across the seafront and the middle of the City. The network across the wider city and smaller areas was, however, somewhat scarce. According to the DfT, as of April 2022, the total public charging devices within Southend stood at 19 devices. This equated to 10.4 devices per 100,000 people. The Council did, however, have the ambition to install further devices in public areas within its control.
- 5.4 The Project Team also noted the Council's ambition to ensure that no resident was more than a 10 minute walk from an EV charger by installing facilities at Council car parks and leisure centres. A plan taken from the feasibility study regarding charging infrastructure produced by Net Zero East was shared with the Project Team. It was explained that by mapping a "10-minute walk" radius to different potential public charging locations on council land, it was possible to identify potential gaps to ensuring adequate access to charging for all residents. The scenarios set out in the plan indicated how the spread of EV charging would enable the greatest access for residents. It was felt that the Council should continue to assess charging volume requirements at the different car parks and begin discussions with companies that could install 'destination' charging options. The type and speed of chargers at each location would need to be determined.
- 5.5 The Project Team accepted that the installation of electric charging infrastructure across the City needed to be accessible for all demand users. It quickly identified that the more challenging issue was the complexities in providing charging facilities in densely urbanised areas with streets which have limited or no off-street parking suitable for private home chargers and very high levels of on street parking. If on-street charging is installed in such areas it would be important that the density of parking spaces is not adversely impacted and the residents who use the on-street parking are still able to keep their car close to their house.
- 5.6 For those properties with driveways off-street parking and dedicated parking facilities, charging at home was a relatively easy and convenient solution, with many energy suppliers now offering EV charging solutions along with specific tariffs. There were also innovative solutions coming to market to enable EV's to act as flexible assets and sell electricity back to the grid (Vehicle to Grid). This could be attractive source of income for EV owners in the future and could encourage EV uptake. Many people who lived in multi-story dwellings or rely on on-street parking, however, would require alternative methods of charging.
- 5.7 There are many areas in the City where roads and pavements are narrow, with vehicles parking on the kerb. Most terraced houses also very often offered no dedicated parking spots, and residents may therefore feel it too risky to invest in an EV charge point if they are not guaranteed ability to park near their home. There are also roads where vehicles are parked and lining both sides of the road. In some cases, residents could run private

charge points from their houses however, there were health and safety concerns particularly in relation trip hazards etc. although residents could seek permission to run gullies from the properties to facilities charging cables. Many roads also have narrow pavements but with the inclusion of traffic calming systems and kerb-side furniture. Any existing kerb-side furniture (such as lamp-posts) could make installing EV charge points difficult without affecting pavement accessibility.

- 5.8 The Project team heard that whilst such street furniture could make the installation of EV charging points difficult without affecting pavement accessibility, these assets provided an opportunity for alternative solutions eg lamp post chargers, pop-up chargers or concealed chargers. Where additional kerb-side furniture is less likely to impose additional further restrictions to accessibility dedicated bays for charging could be considered. Southend is fortunate in that the majority of lampposts in the City are still located at the front of the pavement. This means that a lamppost can be retrofitted very quickly and without any additional cost such as having to use a satellite post, etc.
- 5.9 Although one of the largest challenges for Southend when installing, upgrading and maintaining an electric vehicle charging network is the upfront, operations and maintenance costs, there various funding streams now available for the benefit of local authorities to aid with the installation costs. There were also new companies able to provide appropriate solutions for on-street charging systems with a variety of financing options available, meaning that the facilities could be installed with no financial input from the Council while still generating an income for it.
- 5.10 Two such companies were Connected Kerb and ChargeLight. Representatives from both companies were invited to a meeting of the Project Team to explain their services and what they could do for Southend. Copies of the slides used in the presentations are attached as appendices to this report.
- 5.11 Connected Kerb have developed a multi-award-winning EV charging and smart cities infrastructure solution, recognised as market-leading and addressing many of the issues that have plagued EV charging technologies. The ChargeLight solution uses lamppost charging hardware made by CityEV, a leading charge point manufacturing firm based in the UK.
- 5.12 The Project Team heard that by end of 2022, more than 7,000 lamppost chargers had already been installed in the UK Lamppost chargers already notably in London, Brighton, Coventry, Portsmouth, Hampshire, Wirral, Reading amongst others. In most London Boroughs, lampposts make up appropriately 80% of public charging points
- 5.13 It was evident from the presentations that some locations could facilitate a dedicated on-street parking pay and charging pillar, but this would need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis in discussion with residents. There are also a number of terraced streets that are both too narrow to facilitate on-street charging posts but would leave residents greater than a 10 minute walk from the nearest charge-point without a local solution. It may be worth exploring whether adapting street lighting to incorporate charge-points would be viable in these areas.
- 5.14 Both companies identified some options for the Council to provide a network of charging points. These schemes would qualify for grant funding from the Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles (OZEV) and both had experience in working with local authorities with submitting applications. The Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) is a cross Government, industry endorsed team established to promote the uptake of zero emission vehicles (ZEV). OZEV has the remit to dispense funding for the 'on-street residential chargepoint scheme' (ORCS) to local authorities, supporting the roll-out of EV charge point networks across England. The purpose of the scheme is to increase the availability of on-street

chargepoints in residential streets where off-street parking is not available, thereby ensuring that on-street parking is not a barrier to realising the benefits of owning a plug-in EV.

- 5.15 There is also an opportunity to encourage both the take up of EV's, ensure 'close to home' charging, but also to generate additional income for the council, to introduce a time limited incentive of dedicated EV charging bays in 'high stress' parking residential streets. Subject to agreeing to the terms and conditions, meeting full compliance and passing all legal and statutory due diligence, an opportunity exists to allow residents to apply for a dedicated parking permit at a fee to be agreed, to solely use a specific EV charging bay enabled for this purpose.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 We consider that the in-depth scrutiny project was undertaken within the context of the Council's 2050 ambition and priorities and that the proposed outcomes for the project have generally been achieved.
- 6.2 It will be a challenge to balance competing demands for on-street, car park and destination charging to ensure that provision matches uptake at different locations. Ongoing community engagement and careful strategy development can reduce the risk.
- 6.3 Moving forward the Council should look to continue to assess charging volume requirements at the different car parks and other Council facilities and begin discussions with companies that could install 'destination' charging options as well as fast and rapid charging at car parks and selected third-party destinations. It should also investigate further the potential for on-street charging options particularly in densely urbanised areas where there is no off-street residential parking and areas of high parking stress.
- 6.4 Throughout this report, we have highlighted support of the Council's ambitions to improve its electric vehicle charging infrastructure in terms of aspects of the work programme for the in-depth scrutiny project, alongside the following substantive recommendations to strengthen its preparations for the EV revolution.
- 6.5 We therefore recommend as follows:
- (1) That options be developed for pilot schemes to be mobilised within the current civic year of 2023/24 in appropriate areas as identified by the suggested maps, for pilot schemes for both options including feeder pillars with dedicated charging bays and lamppost and street furniture charging units.
 - (2) That the Council continue to assess charging volume requirements at the different car parks and other Council facilities and begin discussions with companies that could install 'destination' charging options as well as fast and rapid charging at car parks and selected third-party destinations.
 - (3) That ambitious bids be submitted for any available sources of funding to support the increase of the EV charging network.
 - (4) That the success of the pilot schemes be monitored and reported to a future meeting of the Place Scrutiny Committee after the first 12 months of implementation of 1 above for consideration.
 - (5) That the Council installs sufficient numbers of destination or other appropriate EV chargers at all sites where the Council has any form of fleet vehicle operations, to facilitate the transition of its own fleet to EV's.

In-Depth Scrutiny Projects

Since 2000, the Council has undertaken a range of annual in-depth scrutiny projects. The following projects have been carried out since 2013/14.

People Scrutiny Committee

- Providing First-Class Services for Families of Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (2022/23).
- The appropriate use of reablement for older people (65 and over) when discharged from hospital, to maximize the number of people at home after period of 91 days (2019/20-2020/21).
- In context of vision for Southend 2050, what is the vision for young people which improves their lives and what are the pathways to achieve this ambition (2018/19).
- Connecting communities to avoid isolation (2017/18).
- Alternative provision – off site education provision for children and young people (2016/17).
- Transition arrangements from children to adult life (2015/16).
- How the Council assists and excites individuals and community groups to achieve healthier lifestyles (2014/15).
- Southend primary schools' falling grammar school entry figures (2013/14).

Place Scrutiny Committee

- Preparing Southend-on-Sea for the Electric Vehicle Revolution (2022/23).
- To review the level of domestic waste recycling in the Borough, in order to examine what influences residents in terms of their recycling habits and the barriers to achieving a higher rate of recycling and to consider ways of working with residents to improve domestic waste recycling (2019/20-2020/21).
- Maximizing the use of technology (2017/18).
- 20mph speed limits in residential streets (2015/16).
- Understanding erosion taking place on the foreshore (2014/15).
- Promoting a positive image for the town (2013/14).

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

- Developing Strong Governance at Southend-on-Sea City Council: Strengthening Joint Working Between Councillors and Officers (2022/23).
- How the Council and councillors communicate with local people and stakeholders (2019/20-2020/21).
- Additional enforcement resources for Southend (2017/18).
- Control of personal debt and the advantages of employment (2015/16).
- The Council's community leadership role in promoting safer communities (2014/15).
- Impact of welfare changes (2013/14).

Joint Scrutiny Projects

- Enabling Councillors to be Effective (People Scrutiny Committee, Place Scrutiny Committee, Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee) (2021/22).
- Re-imagining the town centre in the context of the vision for Southend 2050 (Place Scrutiny Committee, Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee) (2018/19).
- To investigate the case for additional enforcement resources for Southend (Place Scrutiny Committee, Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee) (2016/17).