

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

**Official Feed and Food Control Service Plan 2022-23**

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## **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 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.
- 1.4 Last year's Service Plan 2021-22 allowed for the redirection of resource from the inspection programme to pandemic control, supporting those businesses still operating and enabling those that changed their activities through this period. The FSA have issued a recovery plan for the delivery of official controls and related activities, and this guidance 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 Aims and Outcomes Pertaining to Southend 2050**

- 2.3 The Council achieved city status in 2021, and the Council's 2050 ambitions have been built on conversations that have taken place with 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.

2.4 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 through assisting and supporting these businesses so that they bring prosperity to the town. 2050 objectives are reviewed at staff conversations and assists in integrating the service across the organisation.

2.5 Public Health (PH) are clear that substantial changes are required to diets over the next 10 years, to meet existing government targets of reducing high fat, salt, and sugar consumption. 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.

### 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, and visitor numbers 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 2020 was 182,800, and the Essex Employment and Skills Board undertook an Evidence Base District Profile for Southend in 2019, and showed the employees by industry sector. This is presented below



3.4 It can be seen that the wholesale and retail trade (which will include food business) had decreased between 2014 and 2018, whilst those offering accommodation and food services has increased between the same time period.

- 3.5 There has been no update to this profile since the pandemic and it is possible that the pandemic may have changed the profile within the City. Feedback from businesses is that it would like bite-size pamphlets of information to be available to them.
- 3.6 Organisational Structure**
- 3.7 The Council structure with respect to delivery of the feed and food services together with details of individual responsibilities is presented in Annex 1 page 18.
- 3.8 Microbiological Examination and Public Analyst**
- 3.9 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 <a href="mailto:fwem@phe.gov.uk">fwem@phe.gov.uk</a></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 : <a href="mailto:EastofEnglandHPT@phe.gov.uk">EastofEnglandHPT@phe.gov.uk</a> Secure email <a href="mailto:mailto:phe.eoehpt@nhs.net">mailto:phe.eoehpt@nhs.net</a></p>	<p>Stool Samples</p> <p>Pathology First Helpdesk Tel 01268-968300</p> <p>Reports provide by David Marquez Information Manager at Pathology First <a href="mailto:david.marquez@pathologyfirst.co.uk">david.marquez@pathologyfirst.co.uk</a> non-secure emails to <a href="mailto:david.marquez@synlab.co.uk">david.marquez@synlab.co.uk</a></p> <p>Specimen Reception Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Prittlewell Chase, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex SS0 0RY Tel 01702-385564/ 385411</p>
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- 3.10 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 <a href="mailto:kss@kent.gov.uk">kss@kent.gov.uk</a></p>	<p>Food Public Analyst – Duncan Arthur Public Analyst Scientific Services Limited 154 Business Park Valiant Way Wolverhampton WV9 5GB Tel: +44 (0) 7734 383707 (Direct) +44 (0) 1902 627238 (General)</p>
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### 3.11 Scope of Regulatory Services

3.12 Regulatory Services is part of Public Protection which sits within Neighbourhoods and Environment. The team aligns the delivery of its services to the Council's 2050 objectives. 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.

3.13 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;
- 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 agenda regarding the healthy eating obesity strategy; and
- Provide business advice.

### 3.14 Demands on the Regulatory Services Team

3.15 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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

3.16 Table 2 highlights the intended inspection regime in line with the FSA Recovery Plan.

**Table 1: Food Premises profile as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022\*.**

<b>FSA category</b>	<b>Number</b>
A	2
B	55
C- broadly compliant	296
C- less than broadly compliant	43
D - broadly compliant	655
D - less than broadly compliant	32
E	512
Not yet rated	181
Outside the programme	109
<b>Total</b>	<b>1885</b>

\*Of the above premises, 1% are manufacturers.

**Table 2: Food Hygiene Inspections Due in line with FSA Recovery Plan:**

FSA Category	No. of Premises	Frequency Required	Due 2022 – 2023e
A	2	Every 6 months	4
B	55	Every 12 months	55
C	339	Every 18 months	242
D	687	Every 24 months	32
E	512	Alternative enforcement or every three years	0
Awaiting Inspection, includes overdue*	181		181
Not in programme+	109		0
Total Inspections due as at 01/04/22			514

\*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 207 new food registrations throughout the year. The awaiting inspection figure includes those inspections where risk-based assessments were conducted.

+Includes premises undertaking very low risk activities e.g., selling pre-packed bars and providing teas and coffees.

- 3.17 With regards to business' included on the database, child-minders are excluded as they are registered with the Council's Early Years team. However, there continues to be an arrangement in place for the dissemination of information to Childminders and for the Early Years Team to work with Regulatory Services to undertake interventions where required.
- 3.18 The awaiting inspection figure includes home-caterers, where the team have undertaken information gathering to identify low risk premises and prioritises high-risk interventions.
- 3.19 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.
- 3.20 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.
- 3.21 Premises rated E for food hygiene and C for food standards can be subject to an alternative enforcement strategy.
- 3.22 Table 2 above shows the number of food hygiene inspections required in line with the FSA recovery plan; however, the recovery plan does suggest that if an Authority is able to inspect more premises to bring the programme of inspections in line with the FLCoP interventions then this should be done. Additional inspections will also be prioritised in response to intelligence.

3.23 Table 3 on page 7 below the required number of food standard inspections required in line with the FSA recovery plan.

**Table 3 Food Standards Inspections in line with FSA Recovery Plan**

FSA Category	No. of Premises	Frequency Required	Due 2022-23
A	0	Every 12 months	0
B	224	Every 24 months	0
C	1356	Alternative intervention or every 5 years	0
Awaiting Inspection* includes overdue	198		198
Not in programme+	107		0
Total Inspections due as at 01/04/22			198

\*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 207 new food registrations throughout the year.

+Includes premises undertaking very low risk activities e.g., selling pre-packed bars and providing teas and coffees.

3.24 There are no high-risk food standards inspections due in year. In line with the FSA Recovery Plan food standards inspections will done when a food hygiene inspection is due to bring the intervention programme in line with the FLCoP.

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.

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 Processing	4
Fishery Products	1
Meat Products	1
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, with limited low risk foods stored in the area. 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 Seasonal Activities

3.30 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. Of the 620 events last year 74 had a significant food element;
- Provides of an export health certification process for local shellfish producers to enable local businesses to export into the EU.

### 3.31 Feed Premises Inspections:

3.32 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.

3.33 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.

3.34 The Council had 20 businesses registered under the Feed (Hygiene and Enforcement) Regulations 2005, for feed inspections as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2022. These are retail premises, which distribute food on for feed purposes, and one manufacturer of animal feedstuffs. Table 5 below highlights the Feed Premises Profile for 2021/22.

**Table 5: Feed Premises Profile for 2021/22.**

Category of Premises	No.
Pet Food Manufacturers R06	1
Supplier of Surplus Food R07	19
Total	20

3.35 A Desktop Exercise for 2022-23 identified that there are three feed inspections to be completed this year (1R06 and 2 R07's).

3.36 Whilst there is now more certainty regarding EU Exit arrangements, there is still a need for the food and feed service to support businesses. 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.

3.37 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.

3.38 Regulatory Services continues to respond to incidents of illegal shellfish harvesting, food fraud, with respect to counterfeit products, and to emerging PH issues.

3.39 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.

### **3.40 Service Requests:**

3.41 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.

3.42 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.

3.43 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.

### **3.44 Enforcement Policy**

3.45 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 category are in 3.16. Regulatory Services Officers will prioritise premises for inspection in line with the FSA Covid-19 Local Authority Enforcement document which outlines how Southend-on-Sea City Council is to respond to the impacts of Covid-19 on the delivery of official food and feed controls:

For this Authority they are:

- 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;
- All registered establishments but awaiting initial inspection / intervention;
- Risk assessment of all new food business registering to determine intervention;
- Feed interventions identified through the national enforcement priorities and co-ordinated by NTSB.

### **4.3 High priority food activities are as follows:**

- Proactive surveillance of open / closed / recently reopened premises / new businesses / change of operation through registration and intelligence;
- Establishments subject to ongoing formal enforcement action;
- Inspections in accordance with the FSA Recovery plan;
- Establishments overdue / due an enforcement visit in line with the FSA recovery plan;
- No numerical target is attached to the number of revisits to be conducted; revisits will be undertaken where issues that seriously affect food safety are identified.

4.4 As specified by the FSA recovery plan, and where resources allow, premises inspections should be aligned with the inspections required by the FLCoP.

- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 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.
- 4.7 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 possible.
- 4.9 As detailed above, all high-risk food standards are prioritised for inspection each year. Whilst there is no requirement to undertake food standards inspections at those rated B or C this year, these will usually be completed, where they are due or overdue, at the same time the food hygiene inspection is undertaken.
- 4.10 The FSA is requiring that 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.
- 4.11 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.
- 4.12 Enforcement Officers will assist for any alternative interventions and sampling.
- 4.13 To assist Southend fishery businesses the service provides export health certificates, specifically to assist our businesses and for other food export certificates. There are six officers who have the necessary accreditation training to deliver this service.
- 4.14 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 those rated 3, 4 and 5 under the FHRS.
- 4.15 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.
- 4.16 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.
- 4.17 The Council will continue to participate in the FHRS to promote transparency and enable individuals to make informed choices about where they eat, and will continue to use and develop the Uniform database to improve reporting capability.
- 4.18 Regulatory Services Group Food and Feed Complaints**
- 4.19 Details of the demand on the service for 2021-22 is in Section 9.1. It is anticipated that the number of complaints received in 2022-23 will be similar to those received in previous years.
- 4.20 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.

#### **4.21 Primary Authority Partnership and Home Authority Scheme**

4.22 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.

4.23 All Officers have access to the Primary Authority Scheme website and will adhere to inspection plans or priorities identified through this scheme, and the team will explore Primary Authority opportunities and training on how the scheme can be delivered has been completed by officers.

#### **4.24 Advice to Business**

4.25 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, particularly in respect of EU Exit issues, and to our obligations under both the FHRS and the Regulators' Code to assist businesses to grow, and for those within the FHRS to achieve a higher rating.

4.26 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 pamphlets, and how the service provides this information will be reviewed this year.

4.27 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.

4.28 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 also includes the officer's contact details.

#### **4.29 Feed and Food Sampling**

4.30 The food sampling policy prioritisation is detailed in Section 3.39 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.

4.31 Whilst 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 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.

4.32 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 where required.

#### **4.33 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease**

4.34 The team continue to respond to demand with respect to coronavirus, including the proposal of utilising trained officers for contact tracing and vaccine hesitancy. If necessary, resource will be diverted to assist in pandemic coronavirus activities and backfilled by contracted inspections where possible, and where underspends facilitate this. Having said this, the FSA aims to bring diverted resources back to the official controls. Progress through the programme will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

4.35 Investigations of non-covid related outbreaks and other incidents of suspected food poisoning will be responded to if and when they occur. The demand for last year is detailed in 9.0 and this level of outbreak is considered average for a year. There are working instructions that detail the responses to be made, and the Council has signed up to the Memorandum of Understanding Outbreak Control Plan.

4.36 SARS-COVID-2 is a notifiable disease and Regulatory Services will need to understand what the requirements from UKHSA will be with respect to collation of information and actions to be taken.

#### **4.37 Incidents**

4.38 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.

4.39 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.

4.40 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 Fraud Team and other agencies.

#### **4.41 Liaison with Other Organisations**

4.42 The Council will continue to participate locally in liaison arrangements with:

- The Essex Food Liaison Group (including microbiological sampling);
- EETSA Food Group;
- EETSA Feed Group;
- South East 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.

4.43 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.

- 4.44 **Promotional Work and other non-official controls interventions for food and feed**
- 4.45 Participation will be as part of a larger exercise organised nationally or through Essex County, and will be prioritised in line with corporate objectives.
- 4.46 Initiatives identified through the PH agenda, including those identified in action plans for Health and Wellbeing will be supported. To this end, the team is working with PH to support the obesity strategy and is considering the adoption of the Essex Tuck-In programme.
- 4.47 The Team provides intelligence to the Intelligence Database (IDB) and directly to the 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 2022-23
Travel and Subsistence	1,700
Equipment	0 (there would be budget available if required)
IT & Legal (included in management, administration, and technical services)	0 (there would be budget available if required)
<sup>1</sup> Sampling Budget	0 (funding stream from grants where available and would be available if required)
*Staffing Costs	355,000
**Contracted food hygiene and standards inspections	11,800
Contracted animal feed inspections	500
Total	369,000

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

\*Includes calculations of on-costs as amended 2022-23

\*\*Underspend on vacant posts and to backfill covid secondments 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 the plan.

**Table 7 Staffing Allocation over Time**

Staff	FTE 2019 – 20	FTE 2020-21	FTE 2021-22	FTE 2022-23
Management Food and Feed	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Regulatory Services Officers Food* vacancy factor used for Contracted inspections	3.2	1.8	2.0	2.2
Enforcement Officers Food	0.5	0.6	1.0	0.7
Contracted food inspections	0.5	0.8	1.6	1.2
<b>Total Officers</b>	4.7	3.7	5.1	4.6
Administration	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5
Regulatory Services Officers Feed	Contracted out service	Contracted out service	Contracted out service	Contracted out service
<b>Total FTE</b>	5.3	4.3	5.7	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 Inspections	1.86
Approved Premises	0.04
Food Standards (if undertaken at time of food hygiene inspection)	0.4
Revisits to check compliance / FHRS	0.03
Service Requests	0.4
Events applications	0.23
HA / Primary Authority	0.01
Advice to Business	0.21
Formal action	0.1
Co-ordination liaison	0.07
Promotional work	0.01
Sampling activities	0.11
Food poisoning (does not consider outbreak)	0.23
Incidents (including illegal harvesting of shellfish)	0.5
Training for competency (Code of Practice requirement) & internal	0.13
Auditing	0.05
Management of activities (service and improvements)	0.9
Administration	0.5
<b>Total Food (including dedicated administration)</b>	<b>5.78</b>
All Feed Activities	0.1

5.9 There is a contract in place to undertake food inspections to assist with meeting the FLCoP requirements, to ensure that high risk interventions are completed in year. However, Table 7 and 8 demonstrate that there is a .69 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 implemented 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 these results and share 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 2021-22

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 2021-22.

**Table 9 Inspections Under the Food Safety Recovery Plan 2021-22.**

FSA Category	Numbers Due	Achieved
A	4	100%
B	33	100%
C	0	176 Due or Overdue Inspections
D	0	384 Due or Overdue Inspections
E	0	68 Due or Overdue Inspections
Unrated assessed for prioritisation	207	100% assessed. 44 high priority inspections completed

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 registering and inspecting fishing vessels registered to the Council.

7.5 The FSA recovery plan only required A rated risk food standards inspections to be completed and this was achieved.

7.6 The team is assisting the Assistant Regulatory Services Officer to complete their training route to achieve full competency for food interventions. They have achieved competency to undertake C, D and E risk inspections. During the year additional inspections were contracted to assist with the priorities of the inspection programme, and to back-fill those undertaking contact tracing.

7.7 Table 10 presents the Feed Premises Profile for the 2021-22 inspection programme, in line with the desk-top study.

**Table 10 Feed Premises Profile Inspection Programme**

Category	No. In category	Due 2021-22	Completed	% Achieved
R7	2	3	3	100
R6	16			
R5 <sup>1</sup>	18			

7.8 To resolve 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**

	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
<i>Prosecutions</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Simple Cautions</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Improvement Notices</i>	2	0	5	9
<i>Prohibitions &amp; Voluntary Closures</i>	1	1	0	0
<i>Seizure and Detentions (including voluntary surrender)</i>	18	51	47	8
<i>Remedial Action and detention notices</i>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>8</b>

8.2 Table 12 Enforcement pertaining to Illegal shellfish harvesting.

**Table 12 Enforcement Pertaining to Illegal Shellfish Harvesting.**

	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	Op Gull April 21	May 21	June 21	Jul 21	Aug 21
Number of shellfish harvesting groups seen / intercepted	1	9	12	3	17	12	18	28
Number of individual shellfish gatherers seen / intercepted	2	20	26	7	66	38	62	90
Number of tools seized	0	0	49	0	34	4	0	14
Number of vehicles of interest seen / intercepted	4	5	9	3	11	3	2	1
Total amount of shellfish seized in kg	0	72.5	379.8	30.2	224.1	20	51.1	98

8.3 When comparing the figures for 2020, there was an overall reduction in shellfish gathering activities in Southend, this is attributable to the disruption programme in place. A total of 282



people were intercepted by Officers, and the volume of shellfish seized would equate to £10,150.

8.4 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. The Team contributed to Operation Gull, which was a three week operation, supplementing the usual interventions undertaken by Environmental Health in July, August, and September 2021. The operation was a success and operations intercepted harvesting groups, individuals and the vehicles used.

## 9.0 Service Requests

9.1 Table 13 highlights the service requests for food safety and standards and infectious disease investigations.

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

	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
<i>Food Safety and Standards</i>	423	596	535	555
<i>Infectious Disease</i>	196	137	266	221
<i>Covid interventions</i>	130	891	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>1624</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>776</b>

9.2 Table 14 highlights the numbers of samples taken.

**Table 14: Sampling**

	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
<i>Microbiological Samples Taken</i>	192	111	210	188
<i>Analytical Samples Taken</i>	30	25	42	0

9.3 The FSA funded an EU imported food sampling project which was completed. There were no samples required for feed analysis in 2021-22.

## 10.0 Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan 2021-22

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. 30 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 new premises inspections 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 FLCoP. A process will be developed and ensure the mapping in Uniform reflects this;
- Work with businesses to identify service and advice needs;
- Review of processes for issuing of health certificates function.
- Team to maintain competency in FCCO to enable certification of EHC for export to EU.
- Improve process compliance of administration staff.

Annex 1

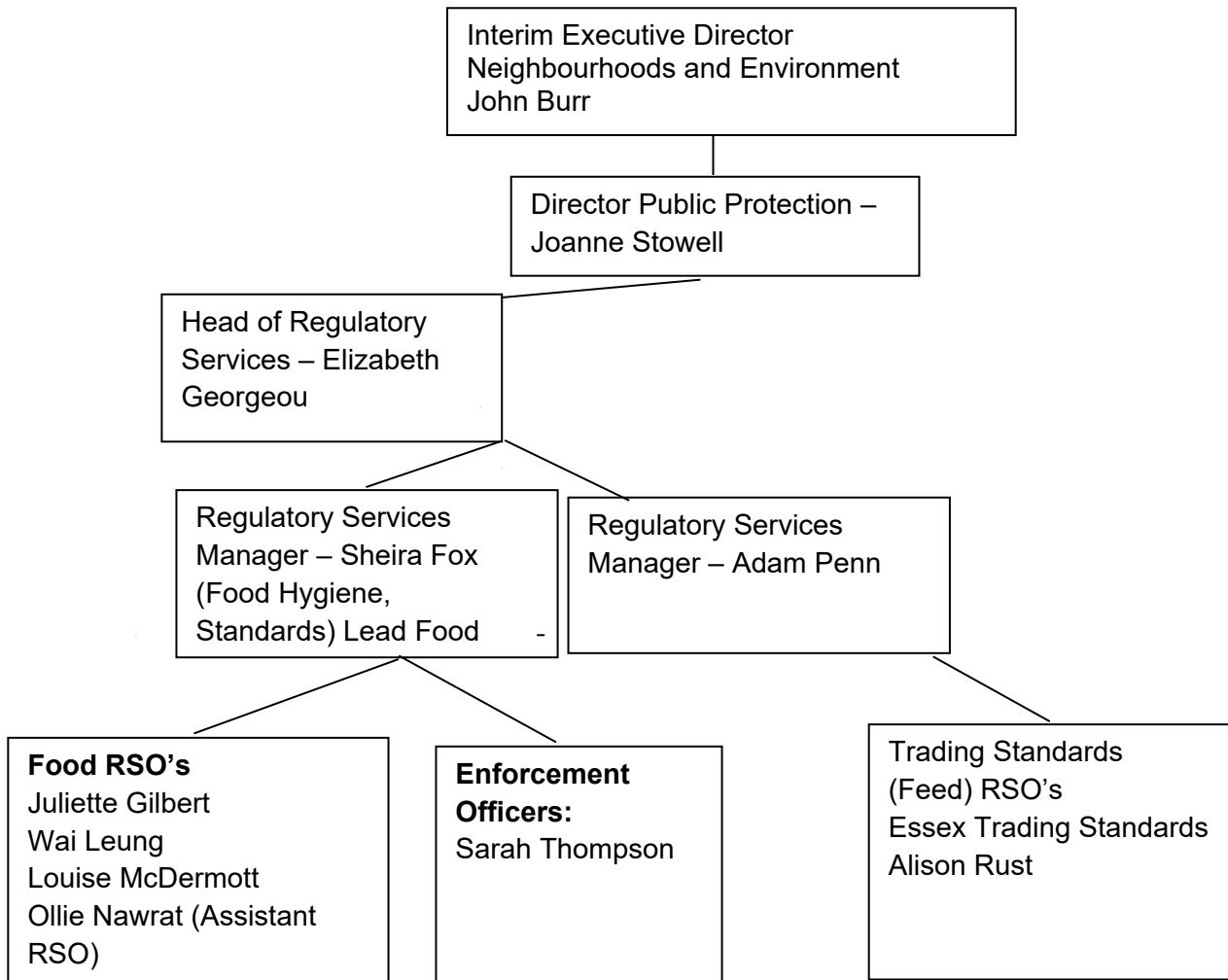
Leader and Cabinet Portfolio for Regulatory Services:

Leader Cllr Stephen George

Public Protection: Cllr Martin Terry

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Food Service – Officers undertaking food work only:



**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL  
SAMPLING PROGRAMME; 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023**

Food Std Sampling Dates	Microbiological Sampling Dates			
	Sampling day: Weds	Sampling Projects In-house, UKHJSA, FSA funded, Eastern Region	Approved/ factory	Cockles (June-Oct)
	13/04/2022	In house-ready to eat seafood including smoked salmon		
	27/04/2022	In house-ready to eat seafood including smoked salmon		
	12/05/2022	In-house scooped & machine ice cream including vegan In house ready to eat salads and environmental surface sampling of burger / kebab premises e.g. surfaces of cutting board, dishwashers, and reusable cloths	Yes	
	25/05/2022	In-house scooped & machine ice cream including vegan In house ready to eat salads and environmental surface sampling of burger / kebab premises e.g. surfaces of cutting board, dishwashers, and reusable cloths	Y	
	08/06/2022	In-house scooped & machine ice cream including vegan In house ready to eat salads and environmental surface sampling of burger / kebab premises e.g. surfaces of cutting board, dishwashers, and reusable cloths		Yes
	22/06/2022	In house sampling made to order sandwiches near schools / university / plain chicken or egg sandwich / rolls (no salad) from sandwich shops including bakeries (and food allergen knowledge test		Yes
	06/07/2022	In house sampling made to order sandwiches near schools / university / plain chicken or egg sandwich / rolls (no salad) from sandwich shops including bakeries (and food allergen knowledge test		Yes
	20/07/2022	In house sampling made to order sandwiches near schools / university / plain chicken or egg sandwich / rolls (no salad) from sandwich shops including bakeries (and food allergen knowledge test		Yes
	03/08/2022	In house sampling made to order sandwiches near schools / university / plain chicken or egg sandwich / rolls (no salad) from sandwich shops including bakeries (and food allergen knowledge test		Yes
	17/08/2022	In house sampling made to order sandwiches near schools / university / plain chicken or egg sandwich / rolls (no salad) from sandwich shops including bakeries (and food allergen knowledge test		Yes
	31/08/2022	In-house sampling – sliced cooked meat, corned beef, sliced gala pies from butchers and delis		Yes

	14/09/2022	In-house sampling – sliced cooked meat, corned beef, sliced gala pies from butchers and delis. Sliced cured meat (salami and similar) biltong		Yes
	28/09/2022	In-house sampling – sliced cooked meat, corned beef, sliced gala pies from butchers and delis. Sliced cured meat (salami and similar) biltong		Yes
	12/10/2022	In-house Listeria shopping basket (pate, soft cheese, smoked fish, ham)		Yes
	26/10/2022	In-house Listeria shopping basket (pate, soft cheese, smoked fish, ham)		Yes
	09/11/2022	In-house Listeria shopping basket (pate, soft cheese, smoked fish, ham)	Yes	Yes
	23/11/2022	In-house sampling RTE seeds / nuts (pistachio) festive products, dates for presence of salmonella		
	05/12/2022	In-house sampling RTE seeds / nuts festive products, dates for presence of salmonella		
<b>NEW YEAR *No sampling activities*</b>				
	11/01/2023	UKHSA Sampling project – TBC		
	01/02/2023	UKHSA Sampling project – TBC		
	15/02/2023	UKHSA Sampling project – TBC		
	01/03/2023	UKHSA Sampling project – TBC		
	15/03/2023	In-house project on emerging risks / re-sampling		
	29/03/2023	In-house project on emerging risks / re-sampling		