

Food Safety

Service Plan

2024/25



Food Safety - why does it matter to Torbay?



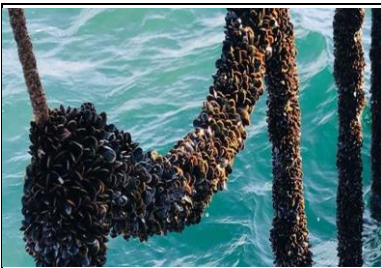
As part of the Local Authority Food Standards Agency (FSA) return 2023-24, Torbay has 1857 registered food businesses. Of this total, 15 of these are approved premises certified by Torbay Council. Torbay has 1460 food premises registered under the National Food Hygiene Scheme.



The Food and Safety Team carried out a total of 511 visits to food businesses in year 2023/24, 135 of these visits were to new food businesses.



The Food and Safety Team have a daily presence at Brixham Harbour to support the export of fish and fish products to the EU and the rest of the world. Appropriately qualified officers within the Food and Safety Team provide consignment checks and sign every Export Health Certificate on an on-demand same day service. Over 1000 certificates were issued in year 2023/24.



As a coastal local authority, 4 mussel beds are monitored by our team for food safety, 1 in Brixham (Fishcombe Cove), 1 in Torquay (Meadfoot) and 2 beds in Lyme Bay. All require at least monthly flesh and biotoxin sampling and this increases during the summer months. Both Torbay and Lyme Bay areas have growing sites which have seasonal A/B classifications.



Between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021), the population of Torbay increased by 6.4%, from around 131,000 in 2011 to around 139,300 in 2021. This is likely attributed to the ability of working people to relocate to the area to work from home following the pandemic. Torbay also attracts 4.5 million visitors a year. Every year, thousands of visitors come to Torbay to visit the English Riviera Airshow. Seasonal variations can impact team resources.

TORBAY COUNCIL FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2024/25

CONTENTS

1.0 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	4
1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	4
1.2 LINKS TO CORPORATE OBJECTIVES AND PLANS	5
2.0 BACKGROUND	5
2.1 AUTHORITY PROFILE.....	5
2.2 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	5
2.3 SCOPE OF THE FOOD SERVICE	6
2.4 DEMANDS ON THE FOOD SERVICE.....	6
2.5 ENFORCEMENT POLICY	11
3.0 SERVICE DELIVERY	11
3.1 FOOD PREMISES INTERVENTIONS	11
3.2 FOOD COMPLAINTS.....	13
3.3 PRIMARY AUTHORITY SCHEME.....	13
3.4 ADVICE TO BUSINESS.....	14
3.5 FOOD INSPECTION AND SAMPLING	14
3.6 CONTROL AND INVESTIGATION OF OUTBREAKS AND FOOD RELATED INFECTIOUS DISEASE	15
3.7 FOOD SAFETY INCIDENTS.....	15
3.8 LIAISON WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS.....	16
3.9 FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION	16
4.0 RESOURCES	17
4.1 STAFFING ALLOCATION	17
4.2 STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLAN	18
5.0 QUALITY ASSESSMENT	18
5.1 QUALITY ASSESSMENT.....	18
6.0 REVIEW PROCESS	19
6.1 REVIEW AGAINST THE SERVICE PLAN	19
6.2 IDENTIFICATION OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND ANY VARIATION FROM THE SERVICE PLAN	20
6.3 TARGETS AND AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT FOR 2024/25	20
APPENDIX A	22
APPENDIX A - ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE CHART FOR FOOD AND SAFETY SERVICE	22

TORBAY COUNCIL FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

1.0 Service Aims and Objectives

1.1 Aims and Objectives

This Food Safety Service Plan is required under the Framework Agreement by the Food Standards Agency. The plan is concerned with food safety enforcement work for which Torbay Council is responsible for. This plan is a Key Policy document and as such requires senior manager approval and sign off to ensure there is transparency and accountability and once approved the plan is published on the Councils website.

The Food Safety Service has the following vision:

- To improve public health and safety through partnership, education and enforcement

Torbay Council's Food Safety Service Aims and Objectives are:

Aim 1: To promote, through education and enforcement, the sale and/or production of food which is fit and without risk to health.

Objective 1.1: To undertake a risk-based programme of inspections and interventions in food premises in accordance with the Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice

Objective 1.2: To register food businesses in accordance with EC852/2004 and the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013.

Aim 2: To prevent and control the spread of food borne illness through education and enforcement.

Objective 2.1: To provide a risk-based response to all notifications of food related illness or suspected illness in order to minimise effects on the community.

Objective 2.2: To carry out pro-active sampling in accordance with nationally and locally set programmes.

Objective 2.3: To provide information, advice and education on food safety and public health issues to the business and residential community.

Objective 2.4: To respond to high-risk complaints concerning food and food safety.

1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

Torbay is a glorious part of Devon encompassing the towns of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham adjacent to the stunning landscape of Dartmoor National Park. Whilst Torbay is a magnet for tourists, and known to many as the English Riviera, it also hosts globally significant technology businesses operating in photonics, marine industries, nanotechnology and medi-tech. We are also home to a rich leisure and cultural scene. Our strategic themes are:

- Community and People
- Pride in Place
- Economic Growth

The Torbay Story is available online at www.torbaystory.co.uk. The website demonstrates the diversity of our local authority.

2.0 Background

2.1 Authority Profile

Torbay Council is a Unitary Authority which comprises of the three main towns of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham on the south coast of England. Tourism is the dominant industry with the majority of employees working in the service industry. Over recent years, the area has seen an increase in technology companies locating into Torbay and since COVID a population increase from people relocating to Torbay due to the ability for people to work from home. There is also a fishing industry predominantly based in the port of Brixham. Brixham is now England's largest fish market by value of fish sold. In 2023 the population of Torbay was 139,322.

More details on the profile of the Authority can be found on the website [Community and Corporate Plan - Torbay Council](#)

2.2 Organisational Structure

The chart attached at [Appendix A](#) shows the structure of the Food and Safety Team.

The Food and Safety Team sits within the Commercial Team of the Community Safety Directorate and comprises of a team of 8 Authorised Officers and a Principal Officer (Food & Safety) that manages the team.

Additional support services: -

Additionally appointed specialist services are provided by the Food Examiner at the NAMAS accredited Public Health

England Laboratory in Porton Down and a Public Analyst from PASS Laboratory Services based in Wolverhampton.

Advice and support is also provided by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA).

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

The Food Safety service comprises a range of key functions:

- Programmed food hygiene inspections of food premises within Torbay.
- Implementing and Promoting the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme across Torbay
- Issuing of export health certificates for the export of food products.
- Specific duties with regard to regulating Brixham Fish Market and the mussel harvesting beds off Brixham, Torquay and Lyme Bay.
- Programmed high risk health and safety inspections and accident investigations.
- Responding to food alerts and incidents of food fraud.
- Investigating food and food related complaints and other service requests on a risk-based approach.
- Implementing an annual food sampling programme
- Registering food premises and mobile traders.
- Assessing imported food and its origin.
- Support, advice and training to food businesses.
- Investigating cases of food related illness and other infectious diseases.

Food Standards enforcement is carried out by the Heart of the South West Trading Standards Service as part of a formal contracted service agreement.

The Food Safety Export Health Certificate service operates 5 days a week on demand from Brixham Harbour Office. Over 1000 export health certificates were issued in year 2023/24.

Emergency food safety issues are currently directed initially to a 24-hour central control team and then onto authorised food officers as required. The Council does not have a formal Out of Hours Service.

2.4 Demands on the Food Service

Registered Food Businesses

On 1st April 2024 the Council had 1857 registered food businesses. The risk profile of these premises shown in Table 1 has been determined in accordance with the FSA's Food Law Code of Practice.

Priority	Premises Category	Frequency of Inspection/ Intervention	Total number of premises in category (1 April 2024)
A	High	6 months	8
B	High	12 months	68
C	High	18 months	234
D	Other	24 months	645
E	Other	36 months	817
U	-	Awaiting inspection	85

The range of premises is as follows:

Primary producers 7

Manufacturers and packers 37

Importers and exporters 1

Distributors 23

Retailers 428

Restaurants and caterers 376

Hotel/Guest House 295

Caring premises 194

Pub/club 144

Takeaway 163

School/college 51

Supermarket 53

Mobile food unit 85

In addition, there are 115 fishing boats registered with Torbay Council.

Approved Establishments

Approval under assimilated EC Regulation 853/2004 is required for certain food establishments that handle products of animal origin, such as meat, fish, egg, dairy products, and processed products of animal origin, which supply other establishments. These establishments may be subject to approval, either by the FSA or by a local authority.

Torbay has 15 Approved Fishery establishments which are resource heavy and require competent officers to undertake in depth food hygiene inspections, take samples for analysis, provide regulatory advice and respond to various stakeholders when required.

The service has been offered support from the Heart of the South West Trading Standards Service, who facilitate the Primary Authority Scheme, in order to formalise and charge for the advice required by approved businesses in Torbay.

Brixham Fish Market

Brixham Fish Market is a significant source of demand for the Food and Safety Team with its daily auction and daily exports to the EU and internationally such as China and India. Brixham is now England's largest fish market by value of fish sold. In 2017 this was in excess of £40,000,000 and the record was broken in 2021 achieving £43,600,000. In 2022 this increased to £60,800,000. 70% of this fish is exported. This trend is set to continue as smaller markets close diverting more sales to Brixham.

An export health certificate (EHC) is an official document that confirms an export meets the health requirements of the destination country. At least one authorised and qualified Food Competent Certification Officer (FCCO) is required to be based at the Brixham Harbour Office to issue EHC's every working day (Monday – Friday except Bank Holidays).

Over 1000 export certificates were issued last year. Due to the nature of the export (mostly fresh fish), most certificates are required on the same day they are requested. Product is sent from Brixham via road, sea and air freight.

Whilst not a statutory function, it is important to recognise the value of this industry to our local authority. Fresh fish for export has a short shelf life that requires a same day on demand export health certificate. Earlier this year, local industry sought to find an alternative authoriser through the use of an official veterinarian. They were unsuccessful in establishing an alternative and so the Food Safety Team continue to be the sole provider of EHC's at Brixham Fish market.

The cost of providing this service has been heavily subsidised in past years by Government following Brexit, however this has now come to an end, and it is important that the Food Safety Team are able to recover the cost of providing this service from the businesses requiring EHC's. This has been carefully calculated and will be reviewed annually in line with costs of providing the service.

This year the team was subject to a focussed audit by the FSA on Shellfish Traceability. The FSA identified that suitable checks on registration documents are not being carried out by the Food Safety Team. The team is awaiting direction by the FSA policy team to correct this issue. As part of the project to replace our Flare / APP database we plan to introduce a new digital platform for shellfish harvesters to produce Shellfish Registration Documents (SRD's). Receiving SRD's in real time for checking by the

Food Safety Team will improve food safety traceability standards. This is identified in Service Improvement 9.

Shellfish Sampling

Being a coastal authority we also have 4 mussel beds, 1 in Brixham (Fishcombe Cove), 1 in Torquay (Meadfoot) and 2 beds in Lyme Bay. All require at least monthly sampling for the presence of harmful E-Coli and biotoxins and this increases during the summer months or when failures are identified. Both Torbay and Lyme Bay areas have growing sites which have seasonal A/B classifications.

The process of monitoring marine biotoxins identifies if there is an increased risk of shellfish becoming contaminated. Where this is identified, the local authority is required to contact the businesses to ensure the businesses take appropriate steps to ensure the shellfish they are placing on the market are safe to eat. Torbay Council are unable to recover the costs of this sampling and are required to pay for samples to be tested by the UKHSA laboratory at Porton Down.

In 2023 we funded a full-time 18-month contract for a dedicated Regulatory Support Officer (RSO) who undertakes the majority of sampling in Torbay including the sampling of mussel beds. Having this role enables the rest of the Food and Safety team to prioritise high risk food establishment interventions. When the RSO is absent, sampling is carried out by the team, reducing their availability to undertake food safety inspections.

The sampling officer (RSO) is reliant on the availability of the shellfish business and access to a boat and its lifting equipment to access the shellfish. Sampling is often postponed due to poor weather conditions and the restrictions of days the laboratory can receive the samples for analysis. Where sampling is delayed, it must be re-arranged.

When biotoxins in shellfish are detected over the legal limit we are required to take action to ensure the affected areas are closed for harvesting.

The post of RSO is currently a fixed term contract supported by an income stream from the Tor Bay Harbour Authority. The role of the RSO has been invaluable for the team enabling the SEHO's to carry out official controls in line with FSA expectations and support the demands of the export health service.

We are seeking to secure permanent funding this year for a permanent RSO to continue to undertake and participate

in the required sampling of shellfish and other national studies and to continue to oversee the registration of new businesses. See 3.5.

Seasonality

The Torbay area has already been described primarily as a tourist area and there are a large number of hotels and other tourist attractions which are only open during the tourist season between Easter and October. Over the years this season has become shorter, and the area is more likely to see visitors coming for a weekend rather than a full week.

This puts pressure on the inspection programme when the interventions are due with officers having to decide whether to bring forward or delay inspections beyond the 28 days as prescribed in the Food Law Code of Practice. There is also a high turnover of food businesses in Torbay putting an additional pressure on the Food and Safety Team. In 2023/24 we received 270 new Food Business Registration Forms. The majority of these new businesses were cafes and snack bars which often close in winter.

Additional demands for 2024/25 include:

Whilst we are meeting the high-risk targets (Category A-C) set by the FSA there is a backlog of the lower to medium risk inspections (Category D) overdue due to the pandemic. In year 2023/24, 50% of Category D inspections were undertaken. We are aiming to complete 100% of Category D inspections this year so there will be no backlog and the inspection programme back in line with the Food Law Code of Practice.

In order to meet this target, we have employed a full-time Food Safety Officer (FSO) to replace the previous part-time FSO. The FSO is a newly qualified FSO and requires assessing through the new assessment framework designed by the FSA. The officer will be required to submit work for checking by a senior officer and will need to demonstrate an understanding of the demands of the legal framework in order to be authorised to undertake inspections in high-risk food establishments. The FSO is authorised to undertake Category D inspections.

The FSO is also required to work from Brixham 3 days a week to provide EHC's to the exporting fishery businesses. This year the FSO will also be overseeing the Category E alternative intervention programme for low-risk businesses.

Torbay has a considerable turnover of premises. In year 2023/24, 272 proactive inspections were undertaken

above the baseline. It is currently not possible to inspect them all within 28 days of registration. However, they are all triaged by the RSO following receipt of the food registration form and those of a high-risk nature are given priority for an intervention by a qualified authorised officer in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice.

2.5 Enforcement Policy

[The Food Law Enforcement Policy](#) sets out what food businesses and others being regulated can expect from the service. The Policy builds upon the principles of good enforcement set out in the Council's Community Safety Enforcement Policy.

All legal action is firstly considered by the Investigating Officer, using the principles of the South West of England Regional Co-ordination of Trading Standards (SWERCOTS) Enforcement & Legal Process Manual. The Council operates an Enforcement Panel where the Principal Officer (Food & Safety) and representatives of the Council's legal team consider the enforcement proposal and actions.

The service is committed to ensuring the active implementation and monitoring of the Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy, which states that services will be provided in a fair and equitable way to all groups and individuals in the community.

3.0 Service Delivery

3.1 Food Premises Interventions

A Regulatory Services Service Plan is produced each year that incorporates the food safety service. Our Service Plans are the cornerstone of our performance management, providing clarity and transparency to show how the Council's ambition and priorities from the Community and Corporate Plan flow through into the delivery by each service and ultimately into the objectives for each of our members of staff. The Food Safety Team has a number of internal performance indicators relating to food hygiene. For 2024/25 these are as follows: -

- Number of high-risk food premises category A-C (100%)
- Number of medium risk interventions category D (100%)
- Number of low-risk interventions category E (100%)

Officers will use a range of different interventions depending on the risk of the business and they are

required to follow Torbay Council's Food Hygiene Interventions and Revisits - FP14E Procedure.

Category E and new potentially low risk businesses are triaged by RSO to ensure that they have basic information for compliance and to identify any that might be of higher risk which will then be inspected.

All new businesses receive a comprehensive advice email from the RSO, and businesses are offered a chargeable advice visit should they require it.

Despite attempting to provide specific advice to new businesses via email and our website we have noted that new businesses continue to miss food safety advice and upon initial inspection have been found to be non-compliant. In some cases, this results in a low Food Hygiene Rating (FHRS) for the business. Consequently, we are working with our internal creative design team to review how we communicate with businesses to attempt to improve compliance.

Businesses requiring a rescore under the FHRS have to pay for any rescore request, the take up of chargeable services continues to be relatively low.

We also aim to keep the number of unrated premises below 100 at any point in time. At the start of April 2024 we had 82 unrated premises, in order to reduce this number, we allocated an existing SEHO to complete all unrated interventions. By September 2024 this number had reduced to 57. The figure is constantly changing as not all newly registered businesses start trading.

All premises, where a statutory notice has been served or which are found to require significant work to be carried out, will be subject to a secondary visit within an agreed timescale. In year 2023/24, 50 revisits were carried out, 24 businesses formally requested to be revisited for the purposes of rescoring under the FHRS. For year 2024/25 the fee for a FHRS rescore visit is set at £200.

For year 2023/24, 25% of Torbay's food businesses improved their food hygiene rating, which was higher than the regional average of 16% and the national average of 20%. 61% remain unchanged and 12% had their rating lowered, which was higher than the regional average of 8% and the national average of 10%. This is likely to be attributed to the cost-of-living increases being experienced by businesses.

In year 2023/24, the Food Safety Team had six authorised Senior Environmental Health Officers (SEHO) to carry out food safety controls, one Food Safety Officer (FSO) and one Regulatory Support Officer (RSO). The team is managed by one full-time Principal Officer (Food & Safety).

3.2 Food Complaints

The Environmental Health Service responds to all complaints about food or food premises made to the Council, however deciding whether or not they require investigation will be done by using a risk-based approach to ensure that resources are used effectively.

There were 13 complaints about defective food received up to the end of March 2024 and 32 food premises complaints.

3.3 Primary Authority Scheme

The Primary Authority Scheme under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2009 aims to give companies the right to form a statutory partnership with a single local authority. The objective of this is to provide robust and reliable advice on compliance that other Councils must take into account when carrying out inspections or dealing with non-compliant premises.

The Food and Safety Team have one primary authority partnership with Leisureplex Hotels Ltd, which is a joint partnership with Heart of the South West Trading Standards Service (Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay). We are hoping to develop this relationship over the coming year as the service is re-purposing to attempt to attract more Primary Authority relationships with local businesses which has the potential to provide an income stream to this service.

3.4 Advice to Business

The Authority is committed to improving food safety standards through both education and enforcement. In order to use limited resources most effectively, advice is targeted and is as follows:

- During inspections and as part of follow up documentation;
- Via electronic Food Safety Newsletters
- Tailored advice email for all newly registered businesses
- Charged for advice visits
- Through guidance information available on the Torbay Council website [Food safety - Torbay Council](#)
- Distribution of relevant food safety material
- Advice and information is given to businesses requesting guidance either by telephone or e-mail.

3.5 Food Inspection and Sampling

The Service has a documented sampling programme which contains details of the sampling and swabbing to be undertaken for the year.

The sampling programme is drawn up in consultation with the SW Food Liaison Group in partnership with the Food Examiner from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Laboratory covering the Torbay area and the Public Analyst at PASS Laboratory Services. Food Standards sampling is arranged by HoTSW Trading Standards Service.

The programme covers authority, county, national and when required European sampling objectives. Each Authority is allocated sampling credits by UKHSA in order to undertake food hygiene sampling which is resourced from an allocated budget within the Food Safety overall budget.

Food safety sampling for 2024/25 will include cheese products (Study 80), raw shell eggs (Study 82) and surveillance sampling at skin piercing establishments (Study 81). Ad hoc sampling may also be requested by UKHSA at any time.

Sampling of 4 mussel beds, 1 in Brixham (Fishcombe Cove), 1 in Torquay (Meadfoot) and 2 beds in Lyme Bay. These sites require samples to be taken for classification purposes and the UKHSA lab make a charge for this.

SEHO's are also required to undertake consignment checks on food for export.

- 3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease
- All formal and informal notifications are recorded on the Environmental Health Service Authority database (Civica APP). Subsequent investigations are based on the type of organism, the number of cases, and are in accordance with UKHSA guidance.
- A documented procedure (4US (FPD14) Notification & Investigation of Sporadic Cases of Infectious Diseases) has been produced and agreed with the UKHSA and follows the principles established in a countywide procedural document, prepared by the Devon Food Safety Subgroup. This is due to be reviewed. During 2023/24, 305 infectious disease notifications were received.
- 3.7 Food Safety Incidents
- The service has a documented procedure (Investigating Food Alerts for Action, Product Recall Information Notices from the Food Standards Agency - FP6E) which deals with action to be taken following the receipt or initiation of a food alert. The FSA Food Law Code of Practice has required specific recording of actions taken following the receipt of a food alert.
- Food alerts are received from the Food Standards Agency (FSA), by direct emails to the Principal Officer (Food & Safety) and the Food Safety email box which is checked every day and by text messages to officers' mobile phones.
- The Food Alert warning procedure for food incidents recognises that such issues are required to be dealt with quickly in accordance with the categories for each food alert. The procedure identifies the mechanism for passing on the food alert to the appropriate officer and an outline of the action to be taken. Most food alert warnings received require only a small amount of officer resource.
- However, on occasions it is necessary to provide more resources to deal with food alerts. Any actions taken on a food alert are documented within the Authority data recording system.

3.8 Liaison with other Organisations

Consistency and value for money is a key feature in all of the Council's Environmental Health functions. With regard to the food safety service, this is achieved by:

- Priority being given to attendance and active participation by the Principal Officer (Food & Safety) at the SW Food Liaison Group and SW Shellfish Liaison Group. This Group co-ordinates peer review and consistency exercises, acts as the discussion forum for topical issues and a means of optimising countywide consistency in enforcement and advice.
- The Food Safety Service also liaises with the following:
 - The UK Health Security Agency
 - Torbay Development Agency (now incorporated into Torbay Council)
 - The Food Standards Agency
 - Devon and Cornwall Police
 - Border Force
 - The Office of Product Services and Standards
 - Heart of the South West Trading Standards Service

The Community Safety Service have access to all development and building control applications and acts as a formal consultee on key planning and building control applications and a statutory consultee on all Licensing Act applications.

3.9 Food Safety Promotion

Education and promotional activities are considered to be important aspects in the delivery of a comprehensive food safety service, and it is achieved in the following ways:

- Food safety articles in the regular Food Safety Newsletter emailed to all subscribing food businesses in Torbay.
- Food information from the Food Safety section of our website and from the team directly.
- Targeted advice/information sent to relevant groups on issues of county or national significance e.g. Cryptosporidium and Food alerts for action.
- Targeted seminars and training sessions have been undertaken on various food safety subjects in the past. We will attend groups to give food safety talks upon request including the local buying consortium The Bridge Group.

4.0 Resources

4.1 Staffing Allocation

The Community Safety Business Unit structure is based on a number of multidisciplinary teams. The Food Safety Team is located within the wider Commercial Team.

Table 2 shows the current full time equivalent of staff working on food safety enforcement, broken down by the competency requirements of the Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice (England) - General qualification and experience requirements.

The table shows we have an estimated 4.6 FTE officers available for food hygiene work including sampling. The actual figure will vary depending on whether the FSO is off sick or on annual leave. Due to the demand of the export health certificate service, officers have reduced time to spend on food hygiene controls as identified in Table 2. Officers are also qualified to deliver health and safety and investigate accidents.

EHRB officers are Authorised Officers who are registered with the Environmental Health Officers Registration Board (EHRB).

The Principal Officer (Food & Safety) manages the team and is not currently undertaking food hygiene inspections.

Table 2: Staff resources dedicated to food safety 24/25

Employee	Category	FTE spent on food hygiene work	FTE spend on exports / sampling	FTE spent on Health & Safety	FTE spent on other work	Total FTE
Principal Officer Full time	EHRB Qualified Officer	0	0	0	1	1
EHO Full time	EHRB Qualified Officer	0.7	0.2	0.1		1
EHO Full time	EHRB Qualified Officer	0.7	0.2	0.1		1
EHO Full time	EHRB Qualified Officer	0.7	0.2	0.1		1
FSO Full time	EHRB Qualified Officer	0.4	0.6	0		1
EHO Part time (0.8 FTE)	EHRB Qualified Officer	0.5	0.2	0.1		0.8
EHO Part time (0.8 FTE)	EHRB Qualified Officer	0.5	0.2	0.1		0.8
EHO Part time (0.8 FTE)	EHRB Qualified Officer	0.5	0.2	0.1		0.8
RSO Full time	N/A	0.6	0.2	0	0.2	1
	Totals	4.6	2	0.6	1.2	8.4

4.2 Staff Development Plan

All food safety staff are subject to an annual appraisal and one progress review which tracks and identifies training and development needs. Food safety training needs are prioritised in the context of wider Environmental Health requirements identified within the service wide training plan.

All food safety staff complete a training record log to further assist in identifying development and training needs and for monitoring the competency of individual officers. The officers undertaking specific duties, such as dealing with approved premises, are identified and the training requirements assessed accordingly.

All staff signed up with ABC Food Law online training from April 2024 and will be expected to complete their CPD hours in accordance the Food Law Code of Practice.

The team have received training on Food information Notices, Illegal Meat control and will receive Investigation and PACE training this year.

As previously identified in section 2.4, the FSO is newly qualified and requires assessing through the new assessment framework designed by the FSA. The officer will be required to submit work for checking by a senior officer and will need to demonstrate an understanding of the demands of the legal framework in order to be authorised to undertake inspections in high-risk food establishments.

We are also producing a wider team competency matrix and training plan to upskill all enforcement staff.

5.0 Quality Assessment

5.1 Quality Assessment

The provision of quality services is one of the Council's three guiding principles and food safety is no exception. With regard to food safety the quality agenda is pursued via a number of methods.

Management Monitoring

The documented quality management procedure includes specific monitoring arrangements that are in place for example checking of inspection letters and notices and joint consistency/quality monitoring visits undertaken by Principal Officer (Food & Safety). Complaints against the service are monitored on a Service and Corporate basis.

Food Standards Agency

The service is required to submit an annual return, detailing the inspections, enforcement and educational activities undertaken, to the Food Standards Agency who closely monitor performance to ensure compliance with the FSA framework agreement.

The FSA also has the power to set standards and to monitor local authority food law enforcement services under the Food Standards Act 1999. The FSA collects information from all United Kingdom food authorities and submits the information to the European Commission.

As detailed in section 3.8, the Principal Officer (Food & Safety) attends meetings of the SW Food Liaison Group to discuss relevant issues on a regular basis. This group comprises of representatives of all the District and Unitary councils, and the UK Health Security Agency.

This forum offers the opportunity to discuss, in detail, a wide range of quality and consistency issues relevant to food safety.

6.0 Review Process

6.1 Review against the service plan

The Council has an established performance management board to monitor the performance of its services.

Power BI reports are produced at the end of each month where an overview of all work activity is produced and shared with the team and Lead Officer. Progress is recorded via Spar.net.

Quarterly performance statistics are also published and provided to the Senior Leadership Team.

Key Performance Indicators are in place as follows;

FS01: to undertake 100% of Category A to C risk Interventions due by the end of March each financial year

FS02: to undertake 100% of Category D risk Interventions due by the end of March each financial year

FS03: to undertake 100% of Category E risk Interventions due by the end of March each financial year

From an operational perspective the Principal Officer (Food & Safety) reviews the key performance measures and service improvements contained in the plan on a monthly

basis. Performance is discussed on a monthly basis with the Regulatory Services Manager and any issues are raised with the Divisional Director for Community Services and Senior Leadership Team.



In addition, regular team meetings and one to one's are held with staff involved in the Food Safety Service. This is to ensure that performance reports, on-going projects and improvements outlined in this service plan are effectively monitored and managed. The notes for these meetings are documented, along with actions and timescales for relevant staff.

- 6.2 Identification of achievements and any variation from the service plan No service plan produced in 2023/24
- 6.3 Targets and Areas of Improvement for 2024/25 Table 3 below identifies the areas for improvement for 2024/25

Table 3 Service Improvement Action Plan 2024/25

Service Improvement Action	Planned Outcome	Link to FSA framework agreement	Target Date
1.To review all the food safety procedures on RIAMS and ensure suitable documents are available out of hours	To ensure that officers are provided with guidance and procedures that are up to date and relevant to ensure consistency and compliance.	All areas of the Framework agreement	31 March 2025 and ongoing
2. To review all staff competencies and CPD and produce a training matrix for Community Safety	To ensure that officers are suitably trained and have completed CPD in line with the Food Law Code of Practice to ensure compliance and quality of work undertaken.	All areas of the Framework agreement	June 2024 Completed
3. To develop a Mobile Working solution as part of new case management system replacement project for Community Safety	To provide a more effective mobile working solution to improve customer experience, achieve wider efficiencies and sustainable operating systems.	All areas of Framework agreement	Ongoing – Refer to Project Plan
4. To complete all due inspections	To ensure food safety to residents of Torbay	All areas of Framework Agreement	31 March 2025

Service Improvement Action	Planned Outcome	Link to FSA framework agreement	Target Date
5. To implement a new case management platform	That appropriate data is available to inform business decisions and improve compliance across the sector. That appropriate information is submitted as parts of FHRS.	All areas of the Framework Agreement	31 March 2025 and ongoing
6. Participate with Licensing on a Caravan site health and safety and licensing project	To develop working relationships with other teams to maintain enforcement skills and provide resilience across the workforce.	N/A	31 March 2025
7. Review staffing and performance with the aim to secure funding for a permanent RSO.	To support the food safety team to carry out its statutory functions and complete all inspections	All areas of Framework Agreement	31 March 2025
8. Review and improve internal monitoring procedures	Ensure accuracy of the database and ensure quality audit checks are completed on approved and registered food premises	All areas of Framework Agreement	31 March 2025 and ongoing
9. Participate in Funeral Parlour visit regime as required by Ministry of Justice	To support the work to regain public confidence in funeral parlours.	N/A	End July 2024 Completed
10. Development of an online Shellfish Registration Document platform	To allow harvesters to apply for SRD's online and move away from paper copies. Allows officers to undertake regular audits on accuracy of SRD's	All areas of the Framework Agreement	End March 2025
11. Sign off of Food Safety Service Plan	To support the food safety team to carry out its statutory functions and complete all inspections.	All areas of the Framework Agreement	End Dec 2024

<p>Written by Samantha Hart Principal Officer Food & Safety</p>  <p>Date 21/12/2024</p>	<p>Agreed by Rachael Hind Regulatory Services Manager</p>  <p>Date: 21/1/25</p>	<p>Sign off Tara Harris Divisional Director Community and Customer Services</p>  <p>Date 17/01/2025</p>	<p>Sign off Hayley Tranter Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities</p>  <p>Date 13/02/2025</p>
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Appendix A

Appendix A - Organisational Structure Chart for Food and Safety Service

