

Food Safety

Service Plan

2025/26



Food Safety - why does it matter to Torbay?



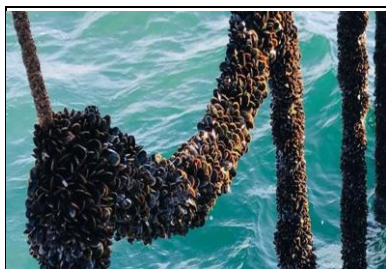
As part of the Local Authority Food Standards Agency (FSA) return on the 31 March 2025, Torbay has 1717 registered food businesses. Of this total, 15 of these are approved premises certified by Torbay Council. Torbay has 1491 food premises registered under the National Food Hygiene Scheme.



The Food and Safety Team carried out a total of 953 visits to food businesses in year 2024/25, additionally 128 revisits were required. We issued 374 written warnings and dealt with 81 complaints. We processed 263 new food business registrations.



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 2024/25.



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 2025/26

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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 Council's 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 2024/25. Demand is expected to remain the same in this coming year.

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 2025 the Council had 1717 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.

Table 1				
Priority	Premises Category	Frequency of Inspection/ Intervention	Total number of premises in category (1 April 2024)	Total number of premises in category (1 April 2025)
A	High	6 months	8	1
B	High	12 months	68	67
C	High	18 months	234	264
D	Other	24 months	645	602
E	Other	36 months	817	715
U	-	Awaiting inspection	85	68

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. Last 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's significant challenge will be when the current Government's trade deal comes into effect when the EU removes the need for health certificates for fish products entering the EU from the UK. This will significantly reduce the workload and income for the Food Safety Team.

Last 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. We have now put in place a procedure to check documents and a new online platform has been built for users to apply for Shellfish Registration Documents (SRD's) online as part of our replacement CRM system icasework. 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 and further sampling is carried out.

The post of RSO has now been secured as a permanent 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.

The RSO role is also expected to develop in line with proposed changes to the Food Law Code of Practice which will enable RSO's to undertake further food regulatory functions than currently. The RSO currently undertakes sampling of shellfish and other national studies and will 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 2024/25 we received 263 new Food Business Registration Forms. This figure remains fairly constant. The majority of these new businesses were cafes and snack bars which often close in winter.

Additional demands for 2025/26 include:

Torbay has a considerable turnover of premises. In year 2024/25, 287 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 2025/26 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 allocated an existing SEHO to complete all unrated interventions. By using a SEHO to complete all new inspections we are keeping the number of unrated business under 80 however businesses continue to register much earlier than the required 28 days before opening and therefore inspections cannot be completed until they are 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 2024/25, 128 revisits were carried out, 50% more than the previous year and 40 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 £210.

For year 2024/25, 25.9% of Torbay's food businesses improved their food hygiene rating, which was higher than the regional average of 15.9% and the national average of 19.5%. 61.5% remain unchanged and 12.1% had their rating lowered, which was higher than the regional average of 8.3% and the national average of 10.2%. This is likely to be attributed to the cost-of-living increases being experienced by businesses.

In year 2024/25, 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).

In May 2024 a local Chinese takeaway in Paignton was successfully prosecuted and was ordered to pay a £3000 fine.

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.

In 2024/25 there were 15 complaints about defective food received and 65 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 2025/26 will include Nuts and Seeds (Study 83), Root vegetables (Study 84) and a reactive study that has yet to be arranged. 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. We are unable to pass this charge onto the businesses. Samples are also taken for analysis on behalf of the Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture (CEFAS) for biotoxin monitoring. Whilst no charge is made for this it requires officer time spent collecting and sending samples to a laboratory twice a month in summer and once a month in winter and repeated sampling for failures.

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. 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 2024/25, 439 infectious disease notifications were received and investigated.

The Authority also became the centre of a nationally recognised *Cryptosporidium* outbreak in May 2024 involving contamination of the mains water supply to over 1000 homes in the Brixham area. A Boil Water Notice was instigated and remained in place whilst the local water utility company repaired the fault. The investigation required significant multi agency input led by the UKHSA. This is likely to have attributed to the 100 extra infectious disease cases recorded in the last year. An investigation by the Drinking Water Inspectorate is ongoing.

3.7 Food Safety Incidents

The service has a documented procedure (Investigating Food Alerts for Action (FAFA), 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.

In March 2025 the Authority dealt with a FAFA involving the distribution of desserts to local hospitals and care homes. Torbay has a high density of care homes (over 100). We contacted all hospitals, nursing homes and care homes in the area to ensure these products were removed from distribution and provided the FSA with a summary of our actions.

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 4.2 FTE officers available for food hygiene work. The figure is reduced by 0.4 from last year as the full-time FSO left and was replaced by a 0.4 FTE FSO. 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 25/26

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 Part time (0.4 FTE)	EHRB Qualified Officer	0	0.4	0		0.4
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	4.2	1.8	0.6	1.2	7.8

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 are signed up with ABC Food Law online training and are expected to complete their CPD hours in accordance the Food Law Code of Practice.

The team have received training on Negotiation Skills and can access the FSA recorded training provided on FSA Link.

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 two returns per year 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 2024/25

Table 3 below identifies progress with the areas for improvement for 2024/25

6.3 Targets and Areas of Improvement for 2025/26 Table 4 below identifies the areas for improvement for 2025/26

Table 3 Service Improvement Action Plan 2024/25

Service Improvement Action	Planned Outcome	Link to FSA framework agreement	Target Date	Achievements and Variations
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	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	Completed
4. To complete all due inspections	To ensure food safety to residents of Torbay	All areas of Framework Agreement	31 March 2025	Completed
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	Completed
6. Participate with Licensing on a Caravan site health and safety	To develop working relationships with other teams to maintain enforcement skills and	N/A	31 March 2025	Completed

Service Improvement Action	Planned Outcome	Link to FSA framework agreement	Target Date	Achievements and Variations
and licensing project	provide resilience across the workforce.			
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	Completed
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	Completed
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	Completed
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	Completed

Table 4 Service Plan 2025/26

Corporate Theme	Planned outcome	Link to FSA	Target date
Community and People	Ensure food safety staff complete all A – E inspections and all unrated inspections each year. Aim to inspect all unrated within 28 days of receiving registration form.	All areas of the Framework Agreement	31.3.26

Economic Growth	Fully test the Business Continuity Plan for the health certificate export process, ensure we can continue to support the Brixham fishing industry at all times by testing and ensuring the internet reliability in Brixham.	All areas of the Framework Agreement	1.9.25
Economic Growth	Complete the Action Plan following the FSA Shellfish Audit in July 2024.	All areas of the Framework Agreement	30.7.25
Community and People	Review, sign off and publish the Food Safety Service Plan to meet the FSA requirement on local authority food services. This plan has been drafted for 25/26 and will be published in April 2025.	All areas of the Framework Agreement	30.4.25
Community and People	Work with Transformation team on developing the new case management system and to incorporate mobile working solutions. Ensure new system is compatible with FSA FHRS system.	All areas of the Framework Agreement	Partially complete and aim to complete by 30.3.26
Community and People	Identify key projects across the Regulatory Services Department to develop good staff working relationships, cross training and to ensure maintain health and safety skills and PACE/Prosecution file skills.	All areas of the Framework Agreement	30.7.25 and ongoing

<p>Written by Samantha Hart Principal Officer Food & Safety</p>  <p>Date 21/05/2025</p>	<p>Agreed by Rachael Hind Regulatory Services Manager</p>  <p>Date: 21/05/25</p>	<p>Sign off Tara Harris Divisional Director Community and Customer Services</p>  <p>Date 21/05/2025</p>	<p>Sign off Hayley Tranter Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities</p>  <p>Date 11/08/2025</p>
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Appendix A

Appendix A - Organisational Structure Chart for Food and Safety Service

