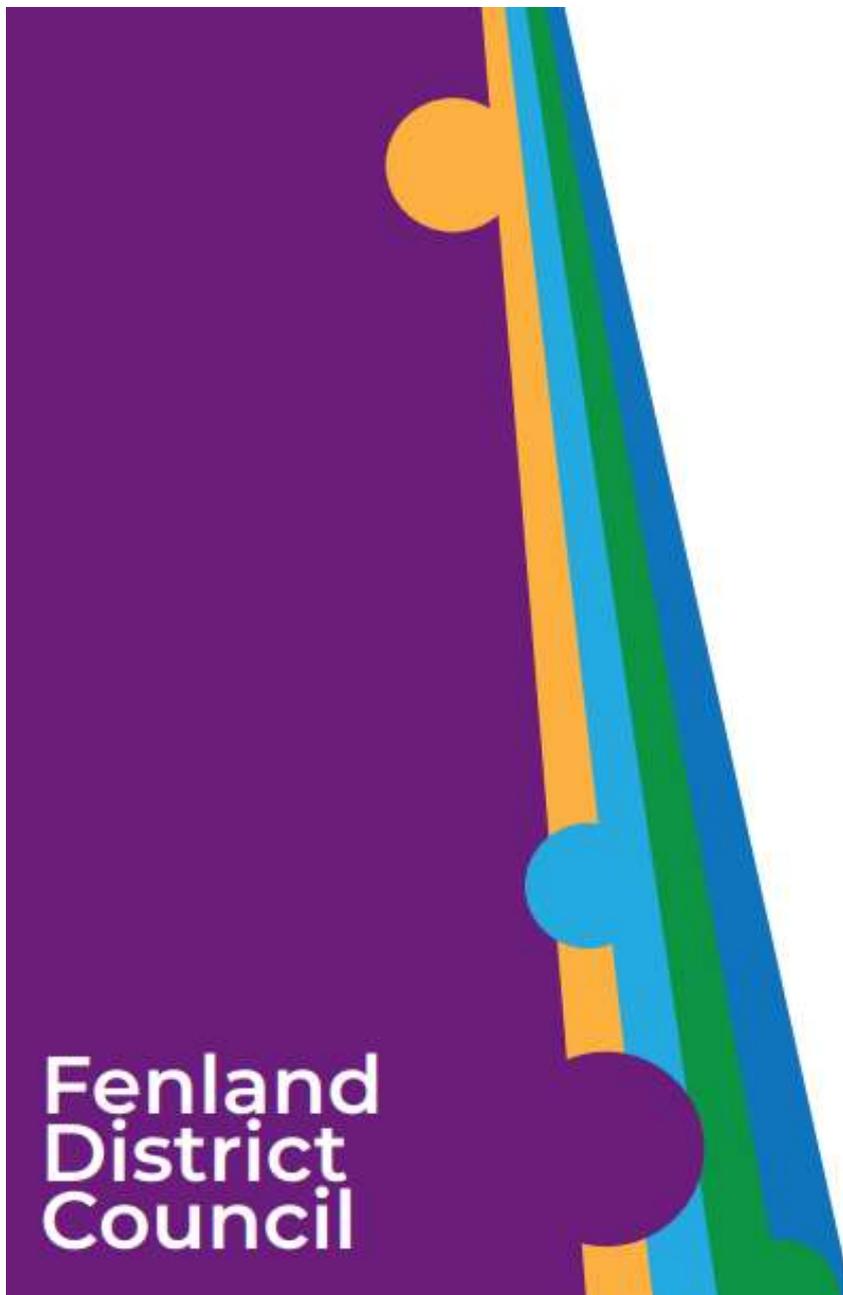


Food Service Plan 2022-2023



**(Incorporating
the Food
Standards
Agencies
Recovery Plan
2021 – 2024)**

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INTRODUCTION

This Food Safety Service plan has been produced as required by the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law enforcement. It is written in the format prescribed by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), its purpose being to demonstrate that Fenland District Council has in place adequate and effective arrangements to meet its statutory obligations in respect of Food Safety. The Plan continues to reflect the work required of food authorities by the FSA in its COVID-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan.

In 2021/2022 our food service delivery has still been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in which the environmental health resource was focussed on responding to the pandemic requirements as written within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough local outbreak management plan (LOMP).

Although restrictions eased in 2021/2022 this was only part way through the year and the backlog of food hygiene interventions which had built up, including an increase in food businesses registering during the period continued to impact on service delivery. Since the restrictions were eased, we focused on identifying additional resource to increase capacity. We managed to increase our resources back to the usual level of 2.25 FTE for food safety delivery priorities.

The Food Safety Service Delivery Plan will continually be reviewed in light of any new FSA requirements. In particular the end of the Recovery Plan and the FSAs plans to implement a revised food hygiene intervention rating scheme expected in year 2023/24.

SECTION 1 OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Service Aims

The Council has a duty to enforce the provisions of the Food Safety Act 1990 and the Food Hygiene and Safety (England) Regulations 2013. Food Safety inspections and enforcement is undertaken by the Environmental Health Team. The aim is to provide a food safety service in Fenland District Council that is proportional to the risk presented and consistent in the standards businesses are expected to maintain.

With food businesses being closed or having changed their operations to cope with the various lockdowns and pandemic restrictions, routine interventions were put on hold nationally with the exception of those presenting the highest risk. Our Food Service Plan has been redrafted (and named as 'Food Service Plan Interim Update 2021-22') to comply with the FSA Recovery Plan for the period from 1 July 2021 to March 2023 which all local authorities must have regard to. The Recovery Plan provides a framework for re-starting the delivery system in line with the Food Law Codes of Practice for new food establishments and for high-risk and/or non-compliant establishments while providing flexibility for lower risk establishments.

The completion of Phase 1 of the Recovery Plan was completed at the end of September 2021. Currently we are working towards the completion of Phase 2 which is currently ahead of the targeted completion date of March 2023. An outline of the recovery plan is provided at Figure 1.



Figure 1. Outline of the FSA Recovery Plan

1.2 Service Objectives

Our aims will be implemented alongside our key objectives:

- Ensuring by means of education and/or enforcement that food intended for human consumption which is produced and/or sold in Fenland District is safe to eat and complies with food safety requirements.
- Advising and educating consumers and service users on food safety matters.
- Delivering a programme of inspections and interventions in relation to food businesses, on a risk-based frequency (in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice and in line with the FSA Recovery Plan).
- Investigating complaints about food and food premises and taking appropriate action.
- Taking enforcement action on a consistent, transparent and proportionate basis in accordance with the Council’s Enforcement Policy and the Enforcement Concordat.
- Supporting work on health inequalities in Fenland by working in partnership with others and with local businesses to improve food nutrition and quality.
- Sampling in response to emerging issues and in support of national studies.
- Preventing the spread of specified infectious and food borne diseases.
- Fulfilling our Port Health Authority functions in particular relating to food imports or exports.
- Working with stakeholders and customers to improve services delivered to them.
- Support relevant strategies for Health and Wellbeing.
- Engaging in an environmental health apprenticeship scheme.

1.3 Links to the Council’s Corporate Objectives and Plans

1.3.1 The corporate priorities below are set out in the Council’s Business Plan (Figure 2). The Plan sets out the actions it will take to ensure the District is a great place to live, work and visit. It will be underpinned by detailed delivery plans, one of which is the Food Safety Service Plan.



Figure 2. Corporate Priorities of Fenland District Council

1.3.2. The Service Plans links include:

- Fenland District Council Business Plan
- Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement and Food Law Code of Practice
- COVID-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan
- Environmental Health Service Plan

SECTION 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of the Food Industry in Fenland

2.1.1 Over 102,500 people live in the district with more than 70% living in the four market towns of Chatteris, March, Wisbech and Whittlesey.

2.1.2 Fenland has the most diverse food safety responsibilities of any of the Cambridgeshire authorities. The food industry in Fenland contributes significantly to the local economy. There are a diverse range of food businesses ranging from large food manufacturers to an ever increasing number of catering outlets located in the main market towns. There are a number of large manufacturers of high risk foods such as meat, fish and dairy products which are distributed nationally and internationally. Most of these establishments are required by food law to be approved by the Council under retained EC regulation 853/2004. These premises require an enhanced level of supervision and inspection by Council officers. There are currently 8 approved premises in the District.

2.1.3 Fenland has responsibility for monitoring live bivalve mollusc shellfish beds at the Mouth of the River Nene for microbiological and biotoxin contamination. Should such contamination be found then appropriate action would be taken in conjunction with other local authorities bordering The Wash. Eastern Inshore Fishery Conservation Authority collect the samples and the Centre for Environment Fishery and Aquaculture Sciences examine the samples and report on the results.

2.1.4 The Council acts as Port Health Authority with responsibility for the port of Wisbech and Sutton Bridge. Officers carry out ship sanitation inspections as per international health regulations and where necessary carry out official controls on imported foods.

2.2 Organisational Structure of Fenland District Council

The political structure of the Council is based on a Cabinet, with a membership of a Council Leader and Deputy and Portfolio Holders. The food safety service is within the Environmental Health Team. The Environmental Health service currently reports to the Portfolio Holder for Housing.

Officers who are authorised to undertake food hygiene controls and related enforcement actions are accountable to the Head of Environmental Health and Compliance for the delivery of the complete range of food safety regulation services for which the Council has responsibility.

2.3 Support Structure

UK Health Security Agency (PHE) examines food samples at its accredited laboratory in Colindale, for bacterial and viral contamination.

A Consultant in Communicable Disease Control at UK Health Security Agency is appointed as Proper Officer under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 and Health Protection Regulations 2011, with regard to food poisoning and food borne infectious disease. Alternates or Deputies have also been appointed.

Food Standards work is administered by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards. This split is due to the legislation. The Team liaises with neighbouring districts, both directly and through regular regional Cambridgeshire Food and Safety Group meetings.

Heads of Service attend strategic meetings at a county level.

2.4 Scope of the Food Safety Service

Food safety activities include:

- Programmed inspections or interventions at food businesses (fixed or mobile).
- Revisits to premises following programmed inspections where significant issues found.
- Carrying out joint visits with Cambridgeshire County Council Trading Standards on matters of mutual interest i.e. food allergens and 'use by' date labelling.
- Carrying out assessments and updating data for the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. This gives consumers information on the outcome of food hygiene inspections.
- Food and food environment microbiological sampling.
- Investigating complaints about the standards of hygiene in food businesses in Fenland.
- Investigating complaints about food that has been produced and/or sold in Fenland.
- The monitoring of live bivalve molluscs shellfish for microbiological and biotoxin contamination.
- Investigating food poisoning and food borne infectious disease cases.
- Responding to Food Standards Agency national food alerts.
- Working in partnership with the FSA and other local authorities in the detection and prevention of food fraud.
- Promoting food safety and good nutrition by education, training and business support.
- Providing advice and information on food safety issues.
- Providing Health Certificates if requested for food to be exported.

- Issue of specific approvals to food businesses subject to that requirement.
- Port health ship sanitation inspections at Wisbech Port and Port Sutton Bridge.
- Carry out sampling of private water supplies.
- Carry out sampling of potable water supplies on ships at Wisbech Port and Port Sutton Bridge.

2.5 Demands on the Food Service

2.5.1 Access to the service

The Environmental Health Service is based at The Base, Melbourne Avenue in March. The public have ready access to this service by way of direct telephone lines, Council Hubs, by e-mail and through the Council’s website.

The service is provided normally at the time the business is trading including evenings and weekends when routine inspections may also be undertaken. In accordance with the FSA Food Law Code of Practice, inspections are without prior warning. However, inspections may be made by appointment where a business does not open at set times or officers need to meet with a particular person or see a particular operation. Where a food business is based in residential premises, officers must give 24 hours’ notice of entry.

Contact details for the team are as follows:

Email: envhealth@fenland.gov.uk

Daytime telephone number: 01354 654321

Out of hours contacts are dealt with by the Council’s CCTV Service (01733 864153) with access to nominated Environmental Health staff in the event of an emergency.

2.5.2 The profile of the registered food businesses in Fenland

As of 1st July 2022, the Team are responsible for 770 premises ranging from large manufacturers to one person operations:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>
Catering	133
Manufacturers and transporters	25
Manufacturers and packers	32
Mobile food units	29
Hotel / Guest House	15
Importers	0
Pub / club	69
Primary producers	5
Retailer / other	32
School / college	31
Small retailer	192
Supermarket / hypermarket	29
Restaurants / Café / Canteen / Catering	87
Takeaways	91
<u>Total</u>	770

- 2.5.3. Low or minimal risk food businesses do not require direct inspection and are dealt with through the Alternative Enforcement Strategy; for example, businesses selling only very low risk foods such as some retailers, businesses where food sales are very limited and registered child minders not providing main meals or handling open food. Under the Alternative Enforcement Strategy, food businesses undertake self-assessment which is then reviewed by an officer. Follow up inspections will be carried out if deemed necessary. In fact a random percentage of these businesses are subject to inspection.
- 2.5.4. Scheduled visits are made to Wisbech and Sutton Bridge ports as is necessary to prevent potential illegal imports and also to inspect shipping vessels under food safety and port health legislation. We view all ship manifestos on a monthly basis for both ports.

Other factors are likely to have an impact on Food Safety Service Delivery in the short to medium term, for example:

- industry staff shortages which affect a businesses’ ability to retain the right number of quality staff to maintain targets
- a reduction in food hygiene standards in some business which increases the Officer’s workload in terms of revisits and subsequent requests for rescores (food businesses are able to request a re-rating after they have made improvements; there is currently a charge of £100 for this service as it requires an additional inspection to be carried out)
- the food hygiene intervention rating scheme will be reviewed and revised for implementation in 2023/24 - this means that during this period there will be a significant amount of work for all Local Authorities and the FSA to undertake in preparation.

2.6 Enforcement Policy

- 2.6.1 Food safety enforcement is undertaken in a graduated manner in accordance with the Council’s Corporate Enforcement Policy and the Regulator’s code. Informal action, advice and persuasion are the usual methods of achieving compliance, but the Council will use other measures if the circumstances demand this. The Council’s Corporate Enforcement Policy is referred to for specific guidance on how enforcement is delivered and the potential triggers for enforcement action.
- 2.6.2 Where there is an imminent risk to health and urgent action required then it will not be possible to use a graduated approach and enforcement action may need to be taken straight away.

Section 3 SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Interventions at food establishments

- 3.1.1 Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, one of this Service Plan’s key priorities was to ensure that all businesses receive an intervention within the minimum frequency set down in the current Food Law - Code of Practice:

Category	Minimum intervention frequency
A	At least every 6 months
B	At least every 12 months
C	At least every 18 months
D	At least every 24 months

E	A programme of Alternative Enforcement Strategies or intervention every 3 years
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As the category is determined by risk to food safety it is possible for a business to move up or down the scale as they improve food hygiene practices, or present different risks in the food produced.

Challenges created by the pandemic meant that priority was given to the high-risk/non-compliant food premises (categories A-B) and new businesses that had not previously been inspected. The FSA accepted and directed that food premises in categories C - E would not receive the expected intervention within the minimum frequency as set down in the Code of Practice.

The Fenland Environmental Health Team are on target to meet the FSA Recovery Plan milestones as set in Figure 1 above. We have completed all A rated establishments, except one which is now shortly overdue but will be completed imminently.

The fact that we managed to deliver on these milestones means we have resumed the given frequencies of food hygiene interventions in accordance with Intervention Rating Scheme in the Food Law Code of Practice.

3.1.2 Programmed Food Safety inspections and Alternative Enforcement Strategy interventions undertaken in 2021/2022:

A – C category (high risk) = 117

D category (low risk) = 185

E category (low risk) = 261

3.1.3 The current inspections / interventions due for 2022/2023 are:

Category A = 3

Category B = 21

Category C = 54

Category D = 91

Category E = 105

3.1.4 During early 2020 the Fenland's food safety contracted partner, Breckland South Holland, completed the required inspection programme and the contract was not refreshed. At that time the authorised food safety officer resource in house was adequate to complete the inspection programme for 2020/2021. However, the emerging pandemic forced the council to again consider a changed approach. In 2021 we appointed two external food safety officers to inspect C - D rated premises to help with the backlog of inspections. This explains the high numbers of C and D inspections, as shown in 3.1.3, which are again due to be carried out next year. However, we also lost two Senior Environmental Health Officers who shared the lead officer role.

Currently we outsourced the lead officer role to Breckland District Council whilst training our newly appointed food safety officer to fulfil this role in the future.

3.2 Food complaints

Additional food premises inspections or enquiries will be undertaken as a result of complaints, revisits, investigations and business requests for advice. Based on previous experience, this may also include additional, unforeseen work, for example, as required by the FSA to deal with national issues.

Our role is to investigate complaints and deal with any breaches of food law. We investigate complaints about food premises that relate to food safety, including poor food hygiene handling.

Dealing with food complaints is a relatively small part of the workload - from April 2021 to March 2022 the Council received 66 complaints.

3.3 The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

3.3.1 Fenland Council has signed up to The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS), which is a Food Standards Agency/Local Authority partnership initiative. It is a national scheme which provides consumers with information about hygiene standards in food business establishments using information gathered by officers at the time they are inspected to check compliance with legal requirements on food hygiene. The food hygiene rating given reflects the inspection findings.

3.3.2 The purpose of the FHRS is to allow consumers to make informed choices about the places where they eat or shop for food and, through these choices, encourage businesses to improve their hygiene standards. The overarching aim is to reduce the incidence of food-borne illness and the associated costs to the economy. The scheme supports businesses who are compliant by providing an independent and publicly available assessment which customers can easily access and understand.

3.3.3 Where a premises falls under the scope of the scheme, they will be awarded a rating on inspection ranging from 0-Urgent Improvement Necessary to 5-Very Good. It is the principle of the scheme that all food businesses, no matter what their size or nature, should be able to achieve a 5 rating. The Food Business Operator will be notified as soon as possible of their rating and in any event within 14 days of the inspection.

3.3.4 All food ratings are periodically uploaded to the FSA website which publishes the ratings at <https://ratings.food.gov.uk/>. All premises that receive a score will also receive a window sticker to display the rating. It is not a legal requirement in England to display a hygiene rating, however this may be changed in near future.

To ensure that the scheme is applied fairly and consistently to businesses there are a number of safeguards in place:

Appeals

All food businesses can appeal their rating if they disagree. The operator is encouraged to speak to the inspecting officer first to discuss the matter but if this is not possible or there is a still a disagreement then the operator needs to register their appeal within 21 days of the

rating notification. The appeal would be determined by the lead food officer or a designated deputy. It may be the case that Fenland may ask a lead food officer in another authority to consider the appeal depending on the circumstances.

The inspection paperwork will be considered in an appeal against a hygiene rating. In some circumstances a further visit to the establishment may be required depending on the nature of the dispute and whether a decision can be made based on the paperwork alone.

The decision of the officer determining the appeal will be communicated to the Food Business Operator in writing within 21 days of the appeal being lodged. On appeal the rating could be increased, kept the same or even decreased.

Re-score Visits

It is the right of any Food Business Operator (FBO) to be able to request another visit to assess the hygiene rating. This is usually the case where the FBO agrees with the rating but has made improvements and requests a reconsideration of the rating.

The FBO must apply in writing and demonstrate what steps they have carried out following the original inspection. There is currently a form for applying for a re-score, which can be downloaded from <https://www.fenland.gov.uk/foodinspections>, however, the request can take any form as long as it is in writing and sufficiently detailed to demonstrate that improvements have been made.

If insufficient information is provided then an application could be refused. In such an event the FBO will be informed of the reasons why and what needs to be done to ensure that adequate information is provided. Any disagreement can be discussed with the lead food officer or put through the Council's 3C's complaints procedure.

The Council currently charges £100 for a rescore visit. On receipt of the payment the visit can occur at any time in the following 3 months. The inspection will be unannounced unless it is necessary to do so where certain staff must be present or an unannounced visit would compromise food safety.

FBOs can request as many rescore visits until the next programmed inspection as long as the fee is paid each time.

Right to Reply

FBOs have a right to reply where they can give an explanation of what steps have been taken since the inspection to rectify non-compliances. The comments are then uploaded to the rating website and can be read alongside the rating. This is not the same as an appeal or rescore visit.

The text can be edited by the local authority before being published at [food.gov.uk/ratings](https://www.food.gov.uk/ratings) to remove inaccurate, irrelevant, defamatory, or offensive remarks.

3.4 Home Authority and Primary Authority

The Primary Authority principle provides a framework for a local authority to act as an interface and provide advice and assist with national regulatory issues. The relationship is initiated by the business making a request to the Council Office for Product Safety and Standards (Safety & Standards).

The Council has not so far been asked to provide a Primary Authority relationship with any of Fenland's food manufacturers. In the meantime, in the role of the Enforcing Authority for local businesses, it will provide advice, guidance and promote good working relationships in routine contact with these companies and other local authorities.

Currently, the service acts as Enforcing Authority for 57 medium to large-scale food manufacturers and packers.

The Council receives frequent requests for assistance from other authorities regarding food safety and contamination of food, in its Enforcing Authority role capacity.

The food service will make note of premises where there is an agreement in place and adhere to any inspection plans provided by the primary authority as well as any guidance and advice provided.

The Service acts as the Originating Authority for our Approved Establishments and any businesses supplying food outside the district. At the request of another regulatory authority, the Team will give appropriate information and assistance.

3.5 Advice to business

3.5.1 The emphasis of the Service is to work with businesses and develop positive working relationships. Officers are willing to invest significant time on advice and guidance to both support enterprise and maintain compliance; and in doing so avoid the need for future formal action.

Examples of business support include:

- Carrying out assessments and publishing National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme scores.
- Providing advice on new allergen labelling requirements.
- Promoting the Food Standards Agency Safer Food Better Business pack.
- New business "start up" advice.
- Advice given during inspections and other visits.
- Providing advice in leaflets or on the Council's website.
- Responding to individual queries.
- Customer evaluation surveys.
- Signposting to translated literature, when proprietors, managers or staff do not have English as their first language.
- Working in partnership within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Board

3.5.2 The Food Service has contributed towards a brochure of guidance for food business relating to food safety guidance and points of contact.

3.5.3 As predicted due to the high number of newly registered business during the pandemic the Council also received a high number of service requests for advice / registering a food business:

Year	Number of service requests
2021/2022	93
2020/2021	305
2019/2020	356
2018/2019	111
2017/2018	60

3.6 Sampling of Food

Microbiological food and food environment sampling plays an important role in monitoring food safety standards. The result of such sampling helps to inform food businesses on areas for improvement.

The cost of microbiological food and food environment sampling is met by UK Health Security Agency. Samples are taken in accordance with legal requirements, Food Law Code of Practice, and guidelines issued by the Food Standards Agency, UK Health Security Agency or Local Government Association. The Food Sampling Standard Operating Procedure gives practical advice on obtaining samples.

Food samples will, in normal circumstances, be submitted to the Public Analyst for chemical analysis and comment and to the UK Health Security Agency for bacteriological examination.

An annual food safety sampling programme is formulated for examination of food for microbiological safety and quality at the UK Health Security Agency Laboratory. The programme includes routine sampling agreed by all District Councils in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex. Fenland District Council will contribute to the sampling programme where resources allow.

As the Port Health Authority, the Council also has responsibility for monitoring the classification of shellfish beds around the mouth of the River Nene. The cost of this sampling activity is recharged equally to the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk and South Holland District Council under the provision of the Port Health Authority Order 1982.

3.7 Food Safety Incidents

On receipt of any food alert from FSA, the Environmental Health service will respond as appropriate and in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice.

A competent Environmental Health Officer in consultation, as appropriate, with the Lead Food Officer or Head of Health and Compliance, will determine response to Food Alerts. and/or other relevant agencies such as FSA, UK Health Security Agency, Trading Standards etc.

In recent times there has been an increasing number of recalls of foods containing allergens where they have not been detailed on the labels. This is of some concern. Officers have worked with FSA other local authorities and FBOs to ensure food safety is not compromised.

3.8 Liaison with other organisations

The Service is committed to formal inter-agency liaison relationships as set out in Food Law Code of Practice. Additional communication takes place at officer level during the process of investigating offences, sharing information and exchange of intelligence.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Public Protection Group have established a Food and Occupational Health and Safety Liaison Group and it monitors their work and strategy. The Group

collaborates on food safety issues to produce common policies and procedures and promote consistency in food safety regulation.

The nominated Senior Environmental Health Officer represents Fenland District Council on the Cambridgeshire Food and Occupational Health and Safety Liaison Group.

This Cambridgeshire Food and Occupational Health and Safety Liaison Group include Trading Standards Officers, Health and Safety Executive and UK Health Security Agency, to ensure cross agency co-ordination of functions.

The Service uses media such as the Council website, Facebook and Twitter to deliver food safety messages and communicate to customers about urgent or general food safety messages.

Officers routinely liaise with Building Control, Planning and Licensing staff, particularly when new businesses are being established.

3.9 Food safety and standards promotional work

The service participates, where resources permit, in targeted local and national activities and interventions.

Over the course of the pandemic there was an increase in new food business registrations and contact and advice on legal requirements were made with each new food business registration.

Continued promotion of the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, to encourage businesses to improve and to inform consumers of standards being achieved.

3.10 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

In 2021-22 the team continued to support the COVID 19 pandemic response. This included contact tracing, particularly related to workplace settings, high risk persons through occupation and venues where cases were later identified of having visited. Where outbreaks were identified relating to settings in the District, Outbreak Management Teams were put in place to identify measures required to stop the spread of the disease and to support the return to previous operational practices.

From April 2021 to March 2022, 21 reports of suspected or confirmed cases of infectious disease were notified to the service, ranging from Salmonella, Campylobacter, Cryptosporidium, Hepatitis and E. coli. This has been a significant reduction in notifications (pre pandemic the annual average was 138 notifications a year). 10 of the 21 cases were investigated.

It is generally recognised that the number of reported cases is a small proportion of the actual number of cases of food borne illness each year in the UK. An Incident Control plan, agreed by the Cambridgeshire Food Liaison Group and UK Health Security Agency would be implemented when circumstances require. A similar plan has been produced by Anglian Water for incidents where the mains water supply becomes contaminated.

Information on infectious and food borne disease is very important and to improve access to this the Food Safety pages on the Councils' website have links to the FSA's website which has a wealth of information and which is available in different languages.

The Council works in partnership with UK Health Security Agency to investigate, prevent and control cases and outbreaks of food related disease.

In cases where the service receives reports of chemical contamination of food and there is a subsequent threat to human health, Environmental Health and Cambridgeshire County Council Trading Standards staff liaise to determine responsibility or undertake a joint investigation as the situation demands.

3.11 Port Health

As a Port Health Authority, the Council has a key role in the prevention of illegal food imports, prevention of infectious disease entry through the ports and ship sanitation issues on board ships. The Council continues to monitor activities at Wisbech Port and Port Sutton Bridge, including visiting ships berthing at the ports.

The Port Health function also includes responsibility for monitoring the classification of shellfish from beds if harvested for human consumption in the port health area in The Wash.

All animal products are automatically considered “high-risk” and are subject to specific import controls and border checks (except the EU where controls are expected to be applied in 2023). Plant-based imports of food and feed are only considered high-risk if they come from certain countries where specific food or feed safety risks have been identified and need to be controlled.

Section 4 RESOURCES

4.1 Financial Resources

The budget allocated for Food Safety services in 2022/2023 is £152,770. The budget allocated to food enforcement functions includes necessary staffing, administration, training and supplies.

4.2 Staffing Resource

Staffing resources commit the equivalent of 2.75 full time equivalent posts on food safety related matters.

4.3 Staff Development Arrangements

4.3.1 The Council has achieved Investors in People accreditation and the required Council procedures are implemented.

4.3.2 All staff have a Springboard meeting with 6 monthly reviews, monthly 1:1's and evaluation of training received. Staff training needs are identified as part of the process and then contribute to the Team learning plan.

4.3.3 All officers carrying out enforcement duties are registered with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) itself or its Registration Board (EHRB). Each enforcement officer is authorised in accordance with the standards and requirements of the respective legislation, FSA Food Law Code of Practice.

4.3.4 A minimum of 20 hours Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training each year on food enforcement related topics and additional training is ensured to promote the development of staff to ensure competent and consistent food law enforcement. Within the 20 hours there must be a minimum of 10 hours 'core' CPD.

4.3.5 The Service uses a range of external training organisations, including the CIEH and FSA, and also external providers in areas of specialist expertise, in addition to relevant in house courses.

Five officers are currently subscribed to ABC Food Law (food law consultancy specialising in the provision of online CPD training to food law enforcement officers in the UK).

4.3.6 Training and development comprises:

- Structured training for all food safety enforcement officers.
- Cascade training sessions, to pass on information and updates.
- Regular updates through staff briefings and training days.
- Routine circulation of relevant information.

4.4 Software

The Service operates a database for the collection and storage of data relating to all premises, inspections, sampling, complaints and other work undertaken by officers. This database is Idox Uniform a well-supported and nationally recognised system.

Section 5 QUALITY ASSESSMENT

5.1 Quality assessment and internal monitoring

- 5.1.1 Officers authorised under food safety legislation are provided with Standard Operating Procedures describing how inspections, complaints and legal powers are dealt and the service is striving to achieve full compliance with the FSA Framework Document.
- 5.1.2 Performance management and monitoring arrangements will be undertaken against the monitoring standard and performance indicators.
- 5.1.3 Internal quality monitoring is undertaken in accordance with the prescribed Standard Operating Procedure.
- 5.1.4 Customer evaluation surveys of food businesses are undertaken to enable customer feedback and identify where service improvements can be made. In addition, a Local Performance indicator is monitored which measures how helpful and supportive officers have been during their inspection.
- 5.1.5 Officers take part in exercises provided by the FSA to ensure that scoring is consistent between officers and with other authorities.
- 5.1.6 Officers are expected to maintain 20 hours of Continued Professional Development (CPD) of which 10 hours must at a minimum relate to 'core' activities.
- 5.1.7 Staff from our partner local authority Breckland Council and any externally appointed contractors are required to provide details of their competencies in line with the Food Law Code of Practice.

Section 6 REVIEW

6.1 Review against the service plan

The Food Safety Service Plan is reviewed annually.

The review against the overall objectives of this Service Plan will be undertaken based on:

- performance and resources available over the previous 12 months
- responses to feedback from local businesses and the community

- observations from Members and the Environmental Health Team
- advice and guidance issued by the FSA

6.2 Identification of any variation from the service plan

Any variation in service plan commitments will be monitored and reviewed as necessary and dealt with each month through the monthly performance report.

New legislative requirements for example, the regulation of beauty treatments, will require training and assessing these premises will be resource intensive. Continued priority of reactive work including notifiable accident, workplace ill health and occupational safety interventions is also necessary.

6.3 Areas of improvement

- To ensure implementation of the Food Standards Agency new delivery models for 2022/23 as they are defined, to modernise food safety enforcement and ensure it is sustainable for the future.
- To continue to monitor the resource provided to food safety enforcement to ensure it is adequate to meet the demands of the service, including new food business interventions in a timely manner. To continue with the timely food safety interventions.
- Continue internal monitoring of officers and review regularly.
- Review competency frameworks (There is a requirement in the Food Law Code of Practice and Guidance to monitor professional competency and consistency. Officers have completed self-assessments under this framework. These self-assessments need to be reviewed by the lead officer for food and practical onsite assessments of inspection techniques undertaken.)
- Develop officer's training plans.
- Continue Lead Officer upskilling.
- Reintroduce Fenland Food Forum events.
- Monitor changes related imports to ensure that improved controls are put in place to the timescale that the UK Government will set out (currently planned for end 2023).
- Manage and update Food Safety pages on the Council's web site.
- Continue to implement efficient electronic processes for customers to access the service.
- Continue to support businesses and work with Trading Standards to achieve compliance with Food Information to Consumers regulatory requirements in respect of food allergens.
- Respond quickly to changes in legislation, for example changes to food allergen requirements.
- Continue to improve use of software for the commercial premises database and handling of requests for service. Storing our data and information electronically.