



EASTSUFFOLK COUNCIL

**Food and Health & Safety
Service Plan 2023/24**

Foreword

On behalf of East Suffolk Council, it is my privilege as Cabinet Member for Community Health to present this service plan for Food Safety, Health and Safety and Port Health Services.

At the heart of our community is the health and safety of the people we serve. It is imperative that we provide a robust framework which reflects our unwavering dedication to enabling public health and enhancing the quality of life for all. This plan serves as a comprehensive road map that outlines our commitment to ensuring the highest standards are achieved.

The content of the plan reflects the Food Standards Agency's service planning requirements of us as a local authority and includes our responsibilities for delivering official food controls, both inland and at our seaports by our Food and Safety Team and Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority based in Felixstowe. The health, safety and well-being of our local authority workforce is paramount and for that reason we include the important work of our Corporate Health and Safety Team.

Many of the digital adaptations to our services made during the COVID-19 pandemic have proven to be successful and we have retained them as permanent methods of working. By using 'paperless' work procedures and utilising a more responsive communications model we are minimising the amount of travel by our staff and contributing to a cleaner, healthier environment for all.

Our colleagues at Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) have been working hard to ensure checks on food entering the UK through the Port of Felixstowe, Harwich International Port and the Port of Ipswich are carried out efficiently, and that the UK's food supply chain is protected. Changes in the rules for bringing food into the UK from the EU means that our Port Health Team may see an increase in the number and frequency of checks it performs after October 2023. In response, a sophisticated update to the system used to track, manage, process and record food imports is currently being developed by SCPHA's team which will ensure that food passing through the UK's largest container port continues to reach its destination on time.

I applaud all those who have contributed to the successes set out in this plan. Our achievements would not be possible without the dedication and expertise of our East Suffolk Council and Suffolk Coastal Port Authority staff and the commitment of our hard-working businesses, our partner organisations and all those who work so diligently all year round.



Cllr Jan Candy

Cabinet Member for
Community Health

Contents

1.0 Service Aims	6
1.1 Aims	6
2.0 Background.....	8
2.1 Profile of the Local Authority	8
2.2 Organisational Structure	11
2.3 Scope of our Responsibilities	14
2.4 Demands on the Service	18
2.5 Compliance and Enforcement Policy	21
3.0 Service Delivery.....	22
3.1 Interventions	22
3.2 Investigations	25
3.3 Other Service Demands	27
3.4 Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Scheme	28
3.5 Advice	29
3.6 Sampling	34
3.7 Control and Investigation of Infectious Disease and Work-related Health Conditions	36
3.8 Incidents	38
3.9 Liaison with Other Organisations	39
3.10 Promotional and Engagement Work	41
4.0 Resources.....	43
4.1 Financial Allocation	43
4.2 Staffing Allocation	44
4.3 Staff Development Plan	45
5.0 Quality Assessment and	48
Internal Monitoring.....	48
6.0 Review	50
6.1 Review against the Service Plan	50
6.2 Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan	53
6.3 Areas of Improvement	54
7.0 Caring for our Environment.....	57
Abbreviations	59
Appendices	61

Acknowledgments

This service plan would not have been possible without the dedication and expertise of Mark Sims, former Food and Safety Manager at East Suffolk Council.

Mark retired in April 2023 following a distinguished 43-year career with Suffolk Coastal, Waveney and East Suffolk Council.

We wish him a very happy retirement.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Corporate management structure.	63
Appendix 2	Food and Safety Team organisational chart.	64
Appendix 3	Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority organisational chart.	65
Appendix 4	Corporate Health and Safety Team organisational chart.	66
Appendix 5	Profiles of food establishments in East Suffolk according to risk at 1 April 2023.	67
Appendix 6	Outline of projected food safety and health and safety service demands 2023/24.	67
Appendix 7	Outline of Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority's current and projected service demands.	70
Appendix 8	Outline of Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority's service activities.	72
Appendix 9	Food Sampling Policy - Food and Safety Team.	74
Appendix 10	Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority outline of sampling activities 2021/22 and 2022/23.	75
Appendix 11	Gastrointestinal disease confirmed cases in East Suffolk 2021/22 and 2022/23.	76
Appendix 12	Key liaison organisations.	77
Appendix 13	Customer satisfaction in 2021/22 and 2022/23.	82
Appendix 14	Summary of food interventions, enforcement actions and compliance data for East Suffolk 2022/23.	83
Appendix 15	Food safety and health and safety additional statistics 2021/22 and 2022/23.	84
Appendix 16	LAE1 local authority health and safety return summary 2021/22 and 2022/23.	86
Appendix 17	Summary of food interventions data for East Suffolk 2021/22 and 2022/23.	87
Appendix 18	Corporate complaints received in 2021/22 and 2022/23.	88
Appendix 19	Food and Safety Team Alternative Enforcement Strategy for low-risk food establishments.	89

1.0 Service Aims

1.1 Aims

Food and Health & Safety

The Food and Safety Team aims:

- To ensure food businesses have adequate arrangements in place to enable safe and hygienic food production and handling.
- To control the spread of infectious diseases through the investigation of cases and outbreaks.
- To secure and maintain a safe and healthy environment in those establishments for which we have health and safety enforcement responsibility.
- To support businesses by providing food export health certification.
- To provide advice and assistance to businesses and consumers.
- To ensure healthier environments where everyone can socialise, relax, travel, shop and work free from any second-hand smoke.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) aims to uphold the protection of public and animal health, as well as controls on organic products and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, as one of the UK's biggest port health authorities. It achieves this by performing essential checks on food, feed and animal-origin products imported to the Port of Felixstowe, Harwich International Port and the Port of Ipswich for entry into the UK. This is in addition to carrying out ship sanitation certification and infectious disease controls, contributing to Britain's biosecurity measures at the border.

SCPHA also aims to continue combatting the spread of African Swine Fever in a joint operation with Border Force, which has seen over one tonne of illegal pork seized from traffic entering the ports of Harwich and Felixstowe.

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team aims to provide competent advice, guidance, support and training in matters relating to health and safety in respect of all the council's employees, activities and workplaces. This enables the council to comply with its legal obligation to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its employees and the health and safety of anyone who might be affected by the council's activities.

Food and Health & Safety

The primary work of the Food and Safety Team is to deliver official food controls and other enforcement activities. It is therefore advisory as well as regulatory. Effective regulation, using digital reports and communication, supports compliant businesses to thrive, which creates a level playing field for business, boosts the economy and provides safe employment in East Suffolk. These factors contribute to the council's Strategic Plan.



Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority



The work of Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) is delivered separately to the inland responsibilities of the Food and Safety Team, however it is still part of the official controls landscape. At the border, official controls dovetail with biosecurity and the wider protection of public and animal health.

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team works across the whole council to assist teams in every service area to work safely. This enables others to support the council's objectives. Good health and safety culture reduces staff absence and improves the organisation's overall resilience and business continuity.



2.0 Background

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

The profile of East Suffolk is set out in our Economic Strategy 2022 – 2027.

Located on the east coast of England, East Suffolk is a diverse local economy, with both outstanding economic assets and potential, and in some areas, continuing regeneration challenges.

East Suffolk has a population of 248,000 with 81,000 people living in the north around Lowestoft, 25,000 living in the south around Felixstowe and about 3,000-10,000 living in market towns such as Woodbridge, Leiston, Framlingham, Saxmundham, Beccles, and Bungay, which are distributed across the middle of the district.

Micro and small businesses are found in abundance across the area. There are over 9,500 businesses within East Suffolk and the vast majority of these are small (fewer than 10 employees). In addition, there is a high incidence of self-employment, particularly in the south of the area. Throughout, the role of micro and small businesses in sustaining the fabric of economic life across East Suffolk is critical.

Alongside micro and small businesses, firms that have grown to at least medium size must be acknowledged. They act as anchors for their local communities, support local supply chains and represent opportunities for sustainable growth which can result in creation of employment opportunities for residents. They are often local, family-owned businesses and although not well known outside of East Suffolk, within it, their role is crucial. The area also hosts important economic assets and offers opportunities that are amongst the most significant in the UK.

These include: The Port of Felixstowe - the UK's busiest container port; Adastral Park; BT's Global Research and Development Headquarters; The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) - an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; The Port of Lowestoft - a key location for the offshore clean energy industry; The East Anglia Array (including East Anglia ONE); and Sizewell (including the proposed Sizewell C - Europe's largest infrastructure project).

The natural capital in the district supports a very distinctive and diverse visitor economy. This includes traditional seaside tourism, major festivals and events, attractions in market/coastal towns, outstanding landscapes, renowned heritage assets and a growing range of quality cultural/heritage activities. However, the economic asset represented by the visitor economy will be compromised if the natural capital represented by the beautiful environment is not protected while being enjoyed. Together, they demand attention and require careful management to develop their full potential in economic terms.

Food and Health & Safety

East Suffolk's historical agricultural and fishing heritage provides a welcome backdrop for many national and international food and drink companies based here. This sector is an important employer in rural areas and includes seasonal and migrant workers. Specialisms include the production and processing of pork, poultry, wines, beer, spirits, chocolate, sauces, yeast, ice cream, smoked fish, shellfish and dairy products. East Suffolk's leisure and visitor economy supports many hospitality, catering and retail food businesses.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Primarily based at the Port of Felixstowe, Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) upholds the protection of public and animal health at the heart of trade and commerce.

The Port of Felixstowe is located close to the main shipping lanes and major ports of Northwest Europe. This contributes to more than four million twenty-foot-equivalent units (TEUs), 2,000 ships and 40% of Britain's trade passing through the port every year. As well as being the UK's largest container port, Felixstowe is a key gateway for roll-on/roll-off (ro-ro) trade with Europe, with up to three daily sailings to the Netherlands.

SCPHA also provides port health functions for Tendring District Council and Ipswich Borough Council through Harwich International Port and the Port of Ipswich, respectively. Harwich is a major ro-ro port handling more than 250,000 commercial vehicle movements per year. With up to four sailings per day from the Netherlands, the importance of the North Sea trading route to Europe is second only to trade crossing the English Channel. In 2023, SCPHA expects to increase the frequency and degree of health checks performed at Harwich following discussions with Hutchison Ports and Tendring District Council.



Although mainly handling aggregate, grain and forestry products, the Port of Ipswich also receives public health services from SCPHA for the protection of seafarers. This includes the testing of potable water sources.

Corporate Health and Safety

The council provides a wide range of services, manages a diverse estate and employs around 970 members of staff in eleven service areas.

The council owns and manages:



4,500 houses



Parks and gardens



Beaches



A caravan park



Harbours and marinas



Playgrounds



Sports centres

Council employees are involved in:



Property maintenance



Regulatory inspections and enforcement



Sport and community activities



Harbour management



Office-based work

2.2 Organisational Structure

East Suffolk Council operates a Leader and Cabinet structure and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health is Councillor Jan Candy.

The Corporate Leadership Team comprises the Chief Executive, three Strategic Directors and eleven Heads of Service. The Corporate Leadership structure is shown in appendix 1. The Chief Executive, Chris Bally, has overall responsibility for the efficient management and execution of the council’s functions. The Environmental Services and Port Health service area reports to Nick Khan, Strategic Director.

Fiona Quinn, Head of Environmental Services and Port Health manages the Environmental Services and Port Health service area. The service area has four teams. Each team has a manager responsible for the delivery of their team’s services as shown in Figure 1. The three teams covered by this plan are the Food and Safety Team, Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority, and the Corporate Health and Safety Team.

Figure 2. Structure of the Environmental Services and Port Health service area

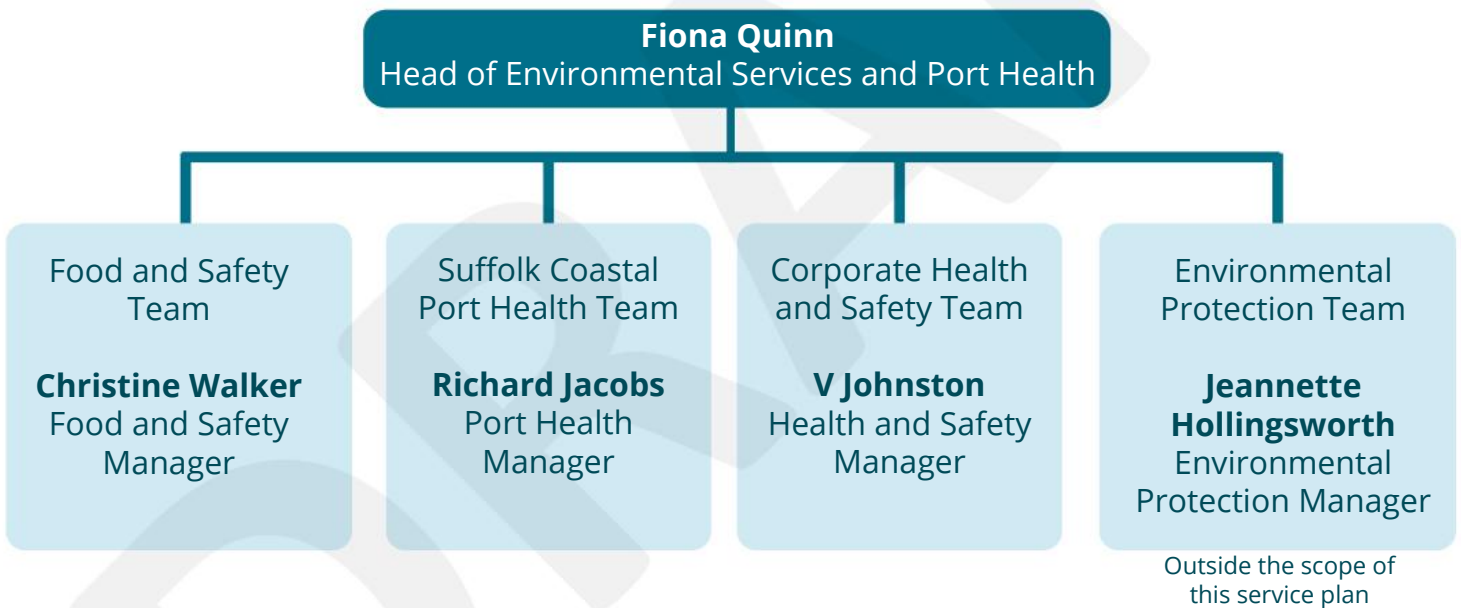


Figure 3. This service plan’s route to adoption by East Suffolk Council



Food and Health & Safety

The Food and Safety Team is managed by the Food and Safety Manager. The team's organisation chart is provided in appendix 2.

The team comprises:

- Food and Safety Manager
- Health and Safety Manager (0.6 FTE)
- Lead Food and Safety Officers
- Food and Safety Officers
- Regulatory Support Officer
- Environmental Health Technical Support Officers.

All members of the team have contributed to the development of this plan, via ongoing discussions and regular team meetings.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) currently employs just over 100 team members as outlined in appendix 3. Led by the Port Health Manager, the three areas essential to SCPHA's success are spearheaded by the Business Manager, Operations Manager and Compliance Manager.

Overseen by the Compliance Manager, the Technical Leads for products of non-animal origin (NAO) are SCPHA's nominated Lead Food Officers, while the Technical Lead for products of animal origin (POAO) is the Senior Official Veterinary Surgeon.

Operations are made up of several highly trained, multi-disciplinary teams performing health checks at Border Control Posts (BCPs). These comprise Authorised Officers (AOs), Port Health Officers (PHOs) and Official Veterinary Surgeons (OVSSs), in addition to Import Control Assistants (ICAs) led by the Business Support Shift Supervisor, who reports to the Business Manager. Each team is overseen and supervised by a Team Leader reporting to the Operations Manager.

The port health function is enabled by finance, public relations, business relations and training professionals led by the Business Manager. This includes an ICT department of quick-response Service Desk Analysts, led by the Service Desk Team Supervisor, and developers led by the ICT Manager.

SCPHA may need to increase the size of its workforce as the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) looks to introduce new import controls for EU goods from October 2023 as part of its Border Target Operating Model (BTOM).

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team is managed by the Health and Safety Manager. The team's organisation chart is provided in appendix 4.

The team comprises:

- 0.4 FTE Health and Safety Manager
- 4 Health and Safety Advisors
 - 1 FTE dedicated to the Housing service area
 - 0.5 FTE dedicated to SCPHA
 - 1.5 FTE supporting all service areas except Housing and SCPHA.



A food trader at the Suffolk Show.



Our team visits events, like the Suffolk Show and Latitude, to ensure that the food being sold is of a high standard.

2.3 Scope of our Responsibilities

Food and Health & Safety

The Food and Safety Team has responsibility for:

- registering and, where appropriate, approving food establishments
- conducting food safety inspections and other interventions of businesses
- implementing an alternative enforcement strategy for food establishments given an intervention rating of category E for food hygiene (refer to appendix 19)
- providing information on food hygiene standards to residents using the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme
- giving advice to food business operators including help on implementing the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Safer Food, Better Business food safety management system
- checking inland imported foods at retail and catering establishments, issuing Food Export Health Certificates and Premises Endorsements for Export
- investigating complaints concerning food, food establishments and food handling practices
- investigating cases of suspected and confirmed food poisoning
- using a range of food safety enforcement actions, including taking emergency prohibition action where conditions present an imminent risk of injury to health, and prosecution



- providing the Lowestoft Port Health Authority service, inspecting ships and issuing Ship Sanitation Certificates
- conducting health and safety interventions at premises for which the council has legal enforcement responsibility. Proactive inspections are used to target the high-risk activities in sectors specified by HSE in the National Local Authority Enforcement Code or where intelligence suggests risks are not being managed effectively

- leading East Suffolk's Safety Advisory Group (SAG) to engage with event organisers to address public safety as a priority
- investigating complaints concerning work premises and practices
- investigating accidents and dangerous occurrences reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- using a range of health and safety enforcement actions, including taking action to immediately prohibit work activities likely to involve a risk of serious personal injury, and prosecution
- acting as a Responsible Authority under the Licensing Act 2003
- registering persons conducting skin piercing practices and tattooing and the premises used
- investigating cases and outbreaks of infectious disease to control it spreading and identify causes
- ensuring healthier environments where everyone can socialise, relax, travel, shop and work free from any second-hand smoke.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) is responsible for all aspects of health and safety relating to imported food, feed and products of animal origin, as well as materials in contact with food. This involves:

- physically examining samples of imports for health risks
- verifying the legitimacy of documents, containers and packaging
- rejecting imports that fail health standards
- permanently operating from the Port of Felixstowe's 70 Shed and 72 Shed Border Control Posts (BCPs)
- providing health checks at Harwich International Port, the Port of Ipswich and Mistley Quay as required, with a view to establishing a more permanent presence in Harwich
- checking catch certificates to help prevent Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing activities



- upholding plastic kitchenware legislation on imports from China
- ship sanitation certification and infectious disease controls
- inspecting vessels to ensure compliance with international and UK health standards
- food hygiene inspections of docked vessels
- verifying organic produce at the point of importation
- undertaking risk-based monitoring and surveillance programmes using current intelligence
- working closely with Trading Standards, the Food Standards Agency (FSA), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and other agencies to ensure effective monitoring and reporting procedures

SCPHA may need to increase the number and frequency of checks it performs as DEFRA looks to introduce new import controls for EU goods from October 2023 as part of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM).

SCPHA has developed the sophisticated Port Health Interactive Live Information System (PHILIS) to track vessel arrivals, record health checks, manage correspondence and process imports as quickly as possible. This is outsourced to the majority of Britain's port health authorities, with ongoing support and maintenance provided by SCPHA's IT team. PHILIS communicates with other industry-standard systems such as IPAFFS, Destin8 and CNS Compass to exchange crucial information electronically.

The much-anticipated next evolution of PHILIS, NEOMA, is currently being developed by SCPHA's IT team. This will use cutting-edge technology, such as artificial intelligence, to increase the efficiency of port health operations and cut down on waste.



Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team:

- champions and promotes Health and Safety throughout the council by highlighting areas of good practice to ensure a safe working environment exists for staff and visitors
- develops and reviews health and safety policies, safe systems of work, procedures and guidance to assist the council in complying with its duties under health and safety legislation
- undertakes inspections and audits of premises, plant, equipment, working arrangements and relevant databases to ascertain the effectiveness of the council's health and safety policies and to encourage a positive approach to health, safety and welfare matters
- monitors and report on health and safety performance to the Joint Health & Safety Committee and Corporate Management Team
- attends regular meetings with operational staff and their managers, ensuring all Health and Safety matters are given adequate consideration
- provides advice and guidance on all aspects of health, safety and welfare to assist management, employees and their representatives to meet their duties under health & safety legislation. Considers the suitable provision of tools and equipment to, and by, employees to ensure safe working methods are adopted wherever practicable
- is responsible for reporting on policy changes, new legal requirements or guidance for duty holders and on health and safety performance
- monitors reported incidents, accidents and dangerous occurrences and diseases and support managers to investigate the causes and prevent recurrence
- investigates employee complaints about health and safety standards
- liaises with the Health and Safety Executive during interventions and investigations
- assesses and delivers any corporate health and safety training needs. Is responsible for delivery of formal training and briefings on relevant health and safety issues and for supporting Health and Safety Champions within service areas
- is responsible for maintaining and analysing appropriate incident statistics with the intention of identifying any adverse trends and producing regular statistical reports.

2.4 Demands on the Service

Food and Health & Safety

The food safety and health & safety regulatory service is delivered by a single team of people with a mix of skillsets.

Most of East Suffolk's food businesses fall to East Suffolk Council for the delivery of official controls and other aspects of food safety and hygiene legislation. The council regulates over 2,900 food businesses and the FSA itself regulates an additional six approved establishments in the area, for example slaughterhouses, cutting plants and game handling establishments. Profiles of local authority regulated food establishments in East Suffolk according to risk are provided in appendix 5.

An outline of the projected demands on the food safety service is provided in appendix 6.

The 31 businesses that are 'approved establishments' in the area produce fish, shellfish, meat, poultry, and dairy, including raw cow's drinking milk and eggs.

Adnams PLC, St Peter's Brewery, Birds Eye Limited, Indo-European Foods Limited, Lallemand Baking and Stokes Sauces Limited are large food and drink businesses within East Suffolk and many of them export products. We issue Food Export Health Certificates to many of these businesses and charge fees for this service.



Our officers have developed positive working relationships with our businesses, such as Birds Eye in Lowestoft.

East Suffolk attracts many tourists particularly during the summer months and the council supports events which will boost the local economy. We have a diverse range of businesses operated by and/or associated with ethnic minorities. This includes Chinese, Bangladeshi, Turkish, Portuguese and Polish. Many of these businesses are takeaways, restaurants, retail shops and barbers.

Lowestoft Port Health Authority inspects ships under the International Health Regulations 2005 to ensure ships are controlling health risks. We issue Ship Sanitation Certificates and charge fees for this service.

Health and safety law is regulated either by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or the local authority with the split being determined by the main activity carried out at the premises. The council generally enforces health and safety law in workplaces where members of the public have access, such as hospitality, retail, consumer services, leisure activities, places of worship and residential care homes along with offices, warehouses and undertakers. The council enforces health and safety law in around 5,700 enterprises. A significant proportion of these are Micro, Small or Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

Investigations into health and safety incidents at premises where East Suffolk Council is the enforcing authority are not foreseeable and can place huge demands on the Food and Safety Team. In 2022/23 two fatal accident investigations have resulted in two officers spending a considerable proportion of their time collecting evidence, producing reports for, and attending, Coroner's Inquests and preparing prosecution files.

The foodhall at the Suffolk Show.



The Food and Safety Team works with event organisers and others during planning and delivery via the Safety Advisory Group to ensure that persons involved in the events, and the members of public that attend them, are protected from risks to their health or safety. Events attracting up to 80,000 people include the Suffolk Show at Trinity Park, Latitude Festival at Henham Park and First Light Festival in Lowestoft. Some events only come to the team's attention at short notice and require significant intervention which can have an impact on the team's workload.

For easy and 24-hour customer convenience we provide all of our application and notification channels online via [the East Suffolk Council website](#). The Food and Safety Team provides a 24-hour, seven-days a week, 52 weeks a year cover for emergencies.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) manages competing demands brought on by ever-changing legislation and commercial activities at the ports of Felixstowe, Harwich and Ipswich.

SCPHA fulfils a legal obligation to deliver official controls at the border, which are frequently updated to reflect new or emerging risks. However, the level of enforcement is determined by the nature and volumes of trade arriving in Felixstowe, Harwich and Ipswich, which can fluctuate considerably.

Every imported consignment has potential to present biosecurity issues and must be processed with vigilance by SCPHA, as officers seek to accurately identify and apply required controls. However, given the current scale of trade and potential impacts on the supply chain, SCPHA aims to minimise intervention on compliant importers and focus on non-compliant products wherever possible. This requires a flexible service with stringent training that asks officers to use their operational knowledge and adapt to changing circumstances.

SCPHA's current service is provided between 6:30am and 10:00pm from Monday to Thursday, 6:30am to 9:30pm on Friday and 6:30am to 2:30pm on Saturdays and Sundays. SCPHA may need to increase the number and frequency of its checks, as well as opening hours and staff numbers, as the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) looks to introduce new import controls for EU goods from October 2023 as part of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM).

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team supports the whole council and responds to internal and external demands, both proactively and reactively 24/7.

The number of employees has increased over the past 18 months and there are a number of newly recruited staff and colleagues who have moved posts within the council resulting in a health and safety knowledge gap. This in turn has increased the demands on the Corporate Health and Safety Team to support managers to manage their team and the team's activities safely.

2.5 Compliance and Enforcement Policy

Our Compliance and Enforcement Policy is currently under review. It covers all of the regulatory services delivered by the council, including official controls and those in the wider food safety, health & safety and port health services.

Officers, including those with responsibility for the enforcement of food and health and safety laws, must have regard to the policy when making enforcement decisions.

The policy reflects Government expectations, via the Regulators' Code, towards the regulation of individuals and businesses and endorses the Government's commitment to better regulation, reducing regulatory burdens on business and supporting economic growth.

Our policy sets out the council's commitment to fair, open, transparent, proportionate and intelligence led regulatory services and advocates a staged approach to enforcement using a range of enforcement options available to secure compliance.

Food and Health & Safety

Decisions made in relation to health and safety regulation will also be made in accordance with the **Health and Safety Executive's Enforcement Management Model (EMM)**.

This takes the officer through a logical and demonstrable assessment process to determine an appropriate and consistent level of enforcement, in line with the Compliance and Enforcement Policy.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) follows regulatory requirements as well as the advice and guidance of national competent bodies. The Compliance and Enforcement Policy is applicable to SCPHA, however port health regulatory framework is prescriptive in many areas.

Corporate Health and Safety

The council is regulated by the Health and Safety Executive who will use the EMM and their own Enforcement Policy Statement. The Corporate Health and Safety Team uses the principles of the EMM to benchmark compliance.

3.0 Service Delivery

3.1 Interventions

Food and Health & Safety

Inspections and other interventions are normally conducted at food establishments using a risk-based approach set out in the Food Standards Agency's Food Law Code of Practice (FLCoP). Establishments may be rated as a higher risk either because of the higher-risk nature of their business or because of the lower standards of food safety present, or both.

Establishments receive an overall risk rating ranging from A (highest risk) to E (lowest risk). Profiles of the food establishments in East Suffolk by risk rating categories A to E are shown in appendix 5, along with the number of new food business registrations received and those businesses that are outside the scope of the Food Standards Agency's Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

New registrations are for new food businesses that have not had a completed inspection. Establishments in the outside category include premises such as primary producers that do not form part of our risk-based intervention programme.

In 2021/23 we were able to deliver the Food Standards Agency's Recovery Plan by directing staff resources to food safety work. An outline of the projected food safety and health and safety service demands in 2023/24 is shown in appendix 6.

We have 936 Category A to D interventions to complete before 31 March 2024. We anticipate we will receive a further 400 new food registrations requiring full inspection through to 31 March 2024 and there are 69 category E interventions that will be subject to our Alternative Enforcement Strategy, as detailed in appendix 19.

Health and safety interventions are conducted by authorised Inspectors in accordance with guidance issued by the HSE to Local Authorities via the National Code and the LAC 67/2 which determines priorities and expectations.

Following national direction from the Health and Safety Executive businesses are only visited if they are deemed to be high risk based on national accident statistics, labour force surveys and local intelligence. In 2022 a project was undertaken to assess compliance in relation to gas and electrical safety in hospitality as that was deemed a national priority. 22 proactive interventions were undertaken and following two recent fires in food businesses with an electrical origin, the project will be continued in 2023/24 with a proactive awareness-raising campaign in conjunction with formal enforcement when it is necessary to secure compliance.

Crowd safety at events is detailed in LAC 67/2 as a priority for proactive intervention. The management of crowds of people is inherently difficult and the harm that can occur depends on the type of event being run. Safety Advisory Group (SAG) meetings are convened to allow the relevant regulatory agencies (police, fire, ambulance, local authority etc.) to gain intelligence prior to any event to allow for emergency planning and advise each other on any areas of concern. The group will also advise the event organiser (duty holder) of ways in which they can manage the event safely although the group as a whole does not have statutory powers and any regulation of the event will be done using primary legislation.

East Suffolk's SAG has representatives from the district and county councils, emergency services, other relevant agencies according to the type of event and event organisers. SAG members formally meet monthly, to review event applications, meet event organisers and advise on public safety but also review a number of plans without the need for a meeting and will provide constructive feedback to the organisers via the chair. Notes of the advice given are shared promptly with SAG members and event organisers.

Recommendations given by SAG are advisory and presented in a non-adversarial way and it is for the organiser to take such steps that are necessary to ensure an event is managed safely. However individual SAG members may have their own legislative powers that relate to parts of the event and will use their statutory powers if risks will not be mitigated following advice from the Group.

East Suffolk welcomes, encourages and supports organisers of safe events. SAG considers events ranging from local community events run by volunteers to large events attracting thousands of people such as the Suffolk Show, Latitude, First Light and international cycle races.

A member of the Food and Safety Team also chairs the countywide SAG and has worked with the Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit to provide training on their role in SAG to officers via multiagency online training. The SAG chair is a member of the Local Authority Regulators Events Expert Panel (LAREEP) hosted by the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) and has worked with emergency planning colleagues to provide local training workshops on working effectively in a SAG.

The Food and Safety Team's health and safety regulatory activities are benchmarked with other Local Authorities at the Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Safety Liaison Group which is chaired by a member of the Food and Safety Team.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

The legislative basis for port health enforcement is prescriptive and dynamic, driving almost all interventions conducted by Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA). As the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) looks to introduce new import controls for EU goods from October 2023 as part of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM), there may be a realignment of legislative requirements for port health. With potential for a more risk-based approach, greater utilisation of the Compliance and Enforcement Policy may become necessary.

Outside of mandated interventions, SCPHA regularly engages in food monitoring and sampling surveillance programmes. Based on intelligence, these can be at the request of the Food Standards Agency and DEFRA, or as a result of in-house requirements. Monitoring and surveillance programmes always aim to provide greater insight into potential, ongoing or emerging threats to food security at the border and enable smarter targeting for the future.

SCPHA's service is resourced based on current and projected levels of required intervention, with the ability to flex to some degree. Appendix 7 provides an outline of SCPHA's current activities.

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team has a planned programme of work each year that is completed alongside reactive work.

To give assurance that contractors are complying with health and safety law whilst providing services such as waste collection and grounds maintenance, the team audits the council's main contractor that delivers services on behalf of the council. We also audit the procedures departments have in place to ensure the risks are being adequately controlled.

Our Health and Safety Advisors collaborate with team leaders to assess risks and devise safe systems of work.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team reviews event management plans submitted with applications to use East Suffolk Council land for events and advises teams within the council when they engage in running community events such as the national cycle races.

Health and Safety compliance within the council and SCPHA is one of several Corporate Risks that are monitored and reviewed regularly.

3.2 Investigations

Food and Health & Safety

Approximately 450 complaints were received in 2021/23 about food and food premises and these are shown in appendix 14. This was fewer than in previous years, possibly due to the COVID-19 epidemic and in 2023/24 we expect to receive approximately 300 complaints. Our Common Food Complaints Guide contains self-help advice on common food complaints together with a brief explanation and suggestions for when to contact us or take some other best course of action.

Report a complaint about a food business.

In 2021/23 we dealt with 112 health and safety-related complaints and this year it is anticipated we will receive approximately 50 complaints. The Food and Safety Team will investigate instances of poor working practices, injury or illness.

We expect to receive approximately 140 RIDDOR notifications in 2023/24. RIDDOR notifications are investigated in accordance with published criteria, including the [Health and Safety Executive's Incident Selection Criteria guidance](#).

From April 2023, the Food and Safety Team has responsibility for enforcement of smokefree legislation and for dealing with smoking in enclosed and substantially enclosed places. We anticipate receiving complaints about this in 2023/24.

The Food and Safety Team reacts to intelligence from other agencies such as the emergency services, other council departments and third-party complaints.

Competent, authorised officers assess all complaints and reports and prioritise their response in accordance with the risk to public health and safety, published guidance, codes of practice and other relevant criteria. An outline of projected food safety and health and safety service demands in 2023/24 can be found in appendix 6.



Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) does not receive food complaints in the same way as the rest of East Suffolk Council. Protocols for imported goods are based on receipt of intelligence which may then be used to target consignments.

Corporate Health and Safety

Corporate Health and Safety Team supports managers to investigate incidents where someone was or might have been injured as a result of East Suffolk Council's activities.

Investigations are also conducted when internal audits identify deviations from agreed safe working methods.



3.3 Other Service Demands

Food and Health & Safety

The Food and Safety Team handles applications for the registration of premises and personnel for the purpose of skin piercing and tattooing, which must be conducted hygienically. Applications can be submitted via East Suffolk Council's online application process.

Notifications of the planned, licenced and non-licenced removal of asbestos from certain premises are received via the HSE's Extranet online service. This website allows the sharing of information across individuals and organisations involved in regulating health and safety in the UK.

The expected service demand for skin piercing and tattooing registrations and asbestos notifications is shown in appendix 6.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Eleven team members from Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) across two teams are combatting the spread of African Swine Fever (ASF) in a joint operation with Border Force, which has seen over one tonne of illegal pork seized from traffic entering the ports of Harwich and Felixstowe.

The operation has secured funding from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) until March 2024.

Corporate Health and Safety

Members of the Corporate Health and Safety Team will undertake duties as directed to assist the council in responding to a Civil Contingency Act emergency or business recovery event.

3.4 Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Scheme

The Primary Authority Scheme is intended to ensure that a business with multiple outlets can have the benefit of a single point of contact for advice that supports consistent enforcement across all of its premises.

Food and Health & Safety

The Food and Safety Team uses the Primary Authority Register to identify if a duty holder has a Primary Authority partner and will have regard to the inspection plans and assured advice provided by it in any local interventions.

The Food and Safety Team is not currently a Primary Authority partner to a business but will consider requests from businesses seeking a Primary Authority.

We act as home authority for all businesses where the relevant decision-making base of an enterprise is located within East Suffolk's area.

Contact us at: environment@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) has not been approached by any importer organisations to set up a Primary Authority Partnership.

Corporate Health and Safety

Not applicable to the Corporate Health and Safety Team.

3.5 Advice

Advice is provided primarily via the council's websites.

- East Suffolk Council - www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk
- East Suffolk Means Business - www.eastsuffolkmeansbusiness.co.uk
- Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority - www.porthealth.uk

Our websites provide direct advice, information and online services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and contribute to the Strategic Plan Priority of Delivering Digital Transformation. This information is available for businesses, employees and visitors along with a contact form which allows people to request advice without having to be redirected from the Customer Services Centre.

Food and Health & Safety

Our food businesses and our other customers regularly seek advice and assistance from us about food safety and health and safety matters. Enquiries that cannot be answered via signposting to our website and other relevant information sources are generally dealt with by email. Appendix 15 shows that in 2021/23 the Food and Safety Team answered approximately 780 requests for food safety and health and safety advice.

Our team offers a free, informal 30-minute telephone or online chat to assist businesses in complying with food and safety regulations.

The team is notified of events via event licence applications, Temporary Event Notices, East Suffolk Safety Advisory Group (SAG), applications to use council land and by other agencies. We use this information to help us target the provision of valuable information about food safety and health and safety.

61 events were notified to the East Suffolk SAG and 15 events were reviewed at SAG meetings attended by the event organisers.

Further information about the role of the SAG and further guidance on running events safely is available on the [Suffolk Resilience website](#).

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) provides and updates comprehensive online guidance about import controls, operational changes and legislative requirements for importers. This is then emailed proactively to a growing list of subscribers and shared on social media.

Advice ranges from overall legislative frameworks to detailed requirements for specific products. Demand for information is expected to rise as the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) looks to introduce new import controls for EU goods from October 2023 as part of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM).

SCPHA also hosts a quarterly forum to answer questions directly from importers and regularly writes informative press releases covered by a variety of media outlets. This involves maintaining strong relations with importers, the press and various industry bodies, including the British International Freight Association (BIFA) and Felixstowe Port Users Association (FPUA).

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team offers advice to all levels within the council e.g., Members, Corporate Leadership Team, managers, team leaders and individual employees.

We use a channel on Microsoft Teams which all staff and councillors have access to. The channel enables staff and members to ask questions and receive communication on health and safety topics. We also use this channel to publish a briefing newsletter on a different topic each month.

We advise the Customer Experience Team on the appropriate steps to be taken to reduce the likelihood of East Suffolk Council employees being exposed to harm as a result of unreasonable behaviours exhibited by customers.

Our team attends the Housing Health and Safety Board and supports the Southwold Harbour Management Committee.

Plus, in 2021/23 we reviewed and offered advice to the council's Asset Management Team on more than 150 applications to hold events on council land.

East Suffolk Council

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk



No one should be digitally excluded from East Suffolk Council services. We work to Level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, the standard many governments use as a benchmark: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk is usable for everyone.

We aim to ensure our web content and processes are intuitive to make it easy for users to access services. We have online information and transactional services covering business grants and funding, business incentives, business rates, business associations and networks, the environment, business support, East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan, supplying the council, business continuity, land and premises, exporting from East Suffolk, East Suffolk business and community awards, regeneration projects, planning, licensing and waste.

The food safety and health & safety content has our own advice and information and links to other sources. We provide online transactional services which enable our service users to:

- register a food business (via [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk))
- order and pay for printed Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB) packs and diaries
- submit a Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) appeal, consent to early publication of rating, request a re-visit, and use their Right to Reply
- submit a food or health incident or complaint
- register premises and/or people for skin piercing, tattooing, electrolysis, acupuncture or semi-permanent make-up
- apply for ship sanitation inspections and certificates at Lowestoft Port
- apply for Food Export Health Certificates, Premises Endorsements and Attestations
- apply for a food business establishment approval
- notify us of cooling towers and evaporative condensers
- pay fixed penalties
- register for a food hygiene training course
- request live bivalve molluscs or shellfish registration documents.



East Suffolk Council



@EastSuffolk



@eastsuffolkcouncil



East Suffolk Council

East Suffolk Means Business

www.eastsuffolkmeansbusiness.co.uk

East Suffolk Means Business content is managed by East Suffolk Council's Economic Development and Regeneration Team.



The team invigorates the local economy through physical regeneration whilst enhancing the local environment to support economic growth and prosperity. They encourage new and existing businesses to survive, revive and thrive, making our district more attractive to residents, visitors and investors alike. The team provide ongoing support to the development of a stronger skill base including skills to future-proof tomorrow's generation, today.

The East Suffolk Means Business website content covers the available support, land and premises, grants and funding, invest in East Suffolk, skills and training, and the key sectors in East Suffolk:

- Agriculture, food and drink
- Marine
- Energy
- Ports and logistics
- IT, Tech and digital creative
- Visitor economy and cultural
- Manufacturing and engineering.



East Suffolk
Means Business



@ESMBiz



East Suffolk
Means Business

Suffolk Coastal Port Health

www.porthealth.uk

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) provides and updates comprehensive online guidance about import controls, operational changes and legislative requirements for importers. This is then emailed proactively to a growing list of subscribers and shared on social media.

PHILIS and NEOMA

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) has developed the sophisticated Port Health Interactive Live Information System (PHILIS) to track vessel arrivals, record health checks, manage correspondence and process imports as quickly as possible. This is outsourced to the majority of Britain’s port health authorities, with ongoing support and maintenance provided by SCPHA’s IT team. PHILIS communicates with other industry-standard systems such as IPAFFS, Destin8 and CNS Compass to exchange crucial information electronically.

The much-anticipated next evolution of PHILIS, called NEOMA, is currently being developed by SCPHA’s IT team. This will use cutting-edge technology, such as artificial intelligence, to increase the efficiency of port health operations and cut down on waste.



3.6 Sampling

Food and Health & Safety

The Food and Safety Team's Food Sampling Policy, including arrangements for the analysis and/or examination of the samples, is set out in appendix 9.

In 2023/24 we will continue to take samples of water and shellfish for classification and algal toxin monitoring purposes.

We also plan to take 80 samples of ready-to-eat food in accordance with our sampling policy, which is detailed in appendix 9. Microbiological analysis of the samples will be for:

- Aerobic colony count
- E. coli
- Listeria species
- Enterobacteriaceae
- Coagulase-positive Staphylococci
- Salmonella species.

Water samples may be taken when investigating outbreaks of Legionnaires' disease.

Unsatisfactory results are followed up in accordance with associated criteria to ensure the risk to public health is protected.



Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

The sampling activities conducted by Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) are outlined in appendix 10 and driven by legislative requirements.

Outside of mandated interventions, SCPHA regularly engages in food monitoring and sampling surveillance programmes. Based on intelligence, these can be at the request of the Food Standards Agency and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), or as a result of in-house requirements. Monitoring and surveillance programmes always aim to provide greater insight into potential, ongoing or emerging threats to food security at the border and enable smarter targeting for the future.

SCPHA uses a number of public analysts for the variety of examinations required of various products. Arrangements are in place for the collection and courier of samples, in addition to regular performance monitoring for laboratories.

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team does not conduct any sampling directly but advises the Asset Management Team and Housing Maintenance Teams on the control of asbestos, legionella and swimming pool water quality which involves the interpretation of sample results.

We will advise the relevant team on what the sampling results mean for the council and any action that is required.



Protecting the public from ill health through animal contact at animal attractions is a priority for our team.

3.7 Control and Investigation of Infectious Disease and Work-related Health Conditions

Food and Health & Safety

The Food and Safety Team investigates food poisoning notifications and outbreaks to control the spread of illness, having regard to the East of England Health Protection Team's Standard Approach to Investigating Gastro-Intestinal Disease Cases. Appendix 11 shows gastrointestinal disease cases in East Suffolk, April 2022 to March 2023.

In 2022, we consulted with the East of England HPT to request members of the public cooperate with medical personal to receive the necessary medical attention to treat a tuberculosis (TB) infection. Failure to take medication for this illness can cause further spread of this infection to other members of the community. These requests are made to control and prevent the spread of TB which could present a risk of significant harm to human health.

Our team also investigated a possible source of E.coli illness within our area. Confirmed cases of food poisoning reported eating food from several different sources, one of which was a food establishment in our area. Officers worked closely with the East of England HPT, part of the UKHSA.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) monitors all Maritime Declarations of Health submitted by vessels to ensure appropriate risk assessments are conducted and infectious disease transmissions are minimised. Early intervention and guidance are obtained from the UKHSA.

The current level of reports and incidents concerning infectious diseases are expected to continue given the variety of vessels seen by the ports of Felixstowe, Harwich and Ipswich from across the world.

Corporate Health and Safety

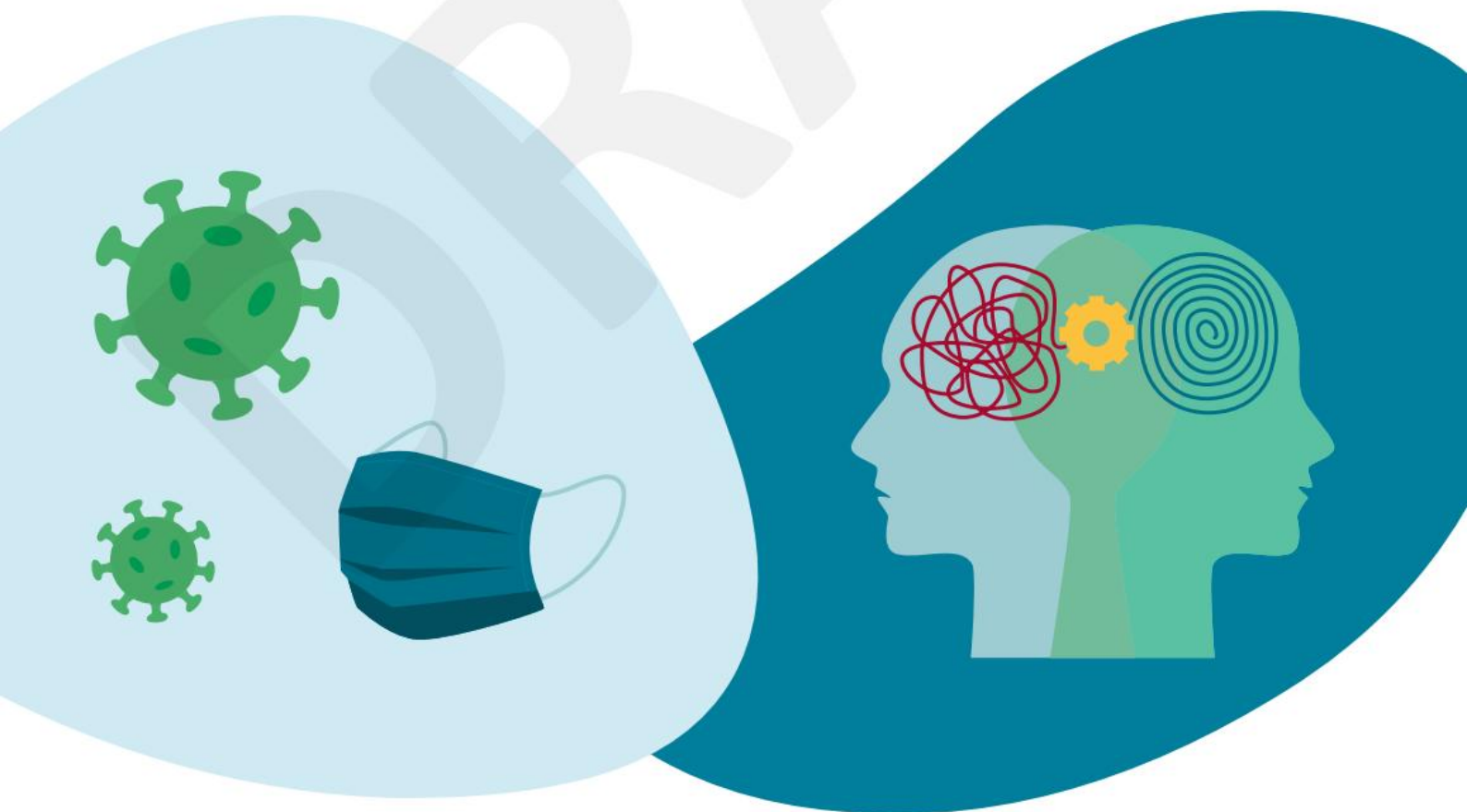
Corporate Health and Safety Team has developed policies in relation to the control of legionella, asbestos, hand arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) and noise.

Routine occupational health surveillance is in place for employees who are exposed to health risks such as working with asbestos, silica dust and powered hand tools.

Mental health and work-related stress are a key priority for the council. The Corporate Health and Safety Team promotes the managers' stress management toolkit and the team stress assessments. These are proactive measures to identify and then modify working practices at an organisational level to reduce the likelihood of people suffering from work related stress. The Human Resources Team leads on the work with individuals who are identified as suffering from work related stress symptoms.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team has worked with individuals to ensure that individuals have appropriate workstations when working from home because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has involved carrying out detailed display screen equipment assessments, remotely.

Following on from the public health crisis associated with Coronavirus the council has been dealing with numerous outbreaks of Avian Influenza. the Corporate Health and Safety Team has provided advice on the safe handling and disposal of bird carcasses and the appropriate way to work in areas affected by the Avian Influenza outbreaks.



3.8 Incidents

Food and Health & Safety

Incidents may be reported to the Food and Safety Team via external agencies such as the emergency services, FSA, Suffolk Public Health, UKHSA, customer complaints or as a formal report under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

We have procedures for responding to FSA food alerts and arrangements in place to respond out of normal office hours.

Health and safety incident investigations will be prioritised according to risk and a decision to conduct a full investigation will be based on the HSE's published Incident Selection Criteria.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Incidents relating to food imports are often flagged by national early warning systems or through direct contact with national competent authorities, such as the Food Standards Agency or Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). These notifications are assessed by Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority's (SCPHA) Technical Leads and the appropriate response is determined. This process is part of SCPHA's normal service with no changes expected.

Corporate Health and Safety

All incidents that relate to health and safety and involve a risk of or actual injury, damage to property or reputation are reported via the internal reporting system.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team responds to significant incidents to prevent further injury and collect evidence, first hand.

All incidents are reviewed by the Corporate Health and Safety Team who will offer support to managers investigating the incident to determine whether the risk controls are adequate.

Incident and insurance claim statistics are reported to the quarterly Joint Health and Safety Committee.

Incidents that meet the criteria for formal reporting under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 are reported to HSE by the Corporate Health and Safety Team.

Health and safety compliance is monitored as a corporate risk and is risk rated periodically by the Corporate Governance Group.

3.9 Liaison with Other Organisations

The service area has wide engagement with third parties, both for regulatory purposes and to provide services in order to deliver regulatory requirements. Appendix 12 maps key liaison organisations.

Food and Health & Safety

The Food and Safety Team is represented at the Suffolk Food Liaison Group, which has links to regional and national food groups to help achieve consistency.

The team participates in FSA FHRs national consistency exercises.

We are also represented on the South East Shellfish Liaison Group. This group shares information and ensures a coordinated approach by its members that include industry representatives, local authorities, FSA, CEFAS and the Environment Agency.

The team is represented at the Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Safety Liaison Group (NSHSLG), which benchmarks the LAE1 intervention return for the Norfolk and Suffolk authorities on an annual basis.

We have representation at national meetings with HSE and liaise with the regional representative on HELA Practitioners Forum.



Wherever possible, our teams train and work together to provide an efficient and effective service. Here, officers are receiving training to undertake ship sanitation inspections.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

As one of the UK's biggest port health authorities operating from Britain's busiest container port, Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) takes a leading industry role through constant dialogue, liaison and representation with various organisations. This includes:

- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- Food Standards Agency
- Animal and Plant Health Agency
- Marine Management Organisation
- British International Freight Association.

SCPHA is also engaged with several Brexit and government initiatives, such as the DEFRA Business Readiness Forum and 2025 UK Border Strategy, and hosts the quarterly Port Health Stakeholder Forum to unite the logistics community for insight into port health. This is in addition to being a founding member of the Major Ports Forum.

Corporate Health and Safety

A member of the Corporate Health and Safety Team attends the Eastern Region Corporate Health and Safety Advisors Group.

Corporate Health and Safety Team members attend two local health and safety group meetings, the Suffolk and North Essex Occupational Safety Group and the Waveney Safety and Environment Group, which are groups comprised of private and public sector health and safety professionals.

Corporate Health and Safety Team individuals are members of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) or the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) or both.

IOSH and CIEH both provide learning and networking opportunities along with professional publications.

3.10 Promotional and Engagement Work

Food and Health & Safety

The East Suffolk Council website is used to publish information proactively, including downloads and signposts to other websites.

At times other than during site visits, direct contact with businesses is generally via email. The Food and Safety Team works with the Economic Development and Communications Teams to promote key topics and messages using social media and business networks.

To ensure consistent information is provided, where available, we promote publications made available by the FSA and HSE etc. that are intended for businesses or the public.

Examples include helping business operators meet regulations on food hygiene through promoting Safer Food, Better Business packs.



Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) sees frequent media coverage about its work in protecting public and animal health, with its Public Relations & Communications Officer writing regular press releases, arranging interviews, overseeing media visits and creating online content.

Having established itself as a vital part of public and animal health in the eyes of policymakers, importers and the general public, SCPHA aims to bring awareness to the importance of stringent checks at the border through public relations, while continuing to reaffirm its position as a leading authority. This is in addition to an ongoing awareness campaign about its joint operation with Border Force to combat the spread of African Swine Fever in Britain.

The Business Relationship Officer also hosts the quarterly Port Health Stakeholder Forum to unite the logistics community for insight into port health, while the Business Team as a whole regularly visits schools and colleges to educate future generations about the role of port health. This includes a recent partnership with Suffolk New College.

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team engages with individuals and managers across the council. The Health and Safety Advisors join team meetings for the services they support.

The council has a Health and Safety Committee which meets quarterly and is attended by the Corporate Health and Safety Team, Human Resources Team, Unison and champions who have been nominated by their service area.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team produces a monthly newsletter and is reinstating drop-in sessions in the breakout areas at Riverside, East Suffolk House, Marina Centre and Port Health as well as online for those who are no longer predominantly office based.

Working in conjunction with the Health and Wellbeing group, the team promotes campaigns, opportunities and techniques for keeping colleagues in good physical and mental health.

4.0 Resources

4.1 Financial Allocation

Details of budgetary provision for the service area are included in [East Suffolk's Budget Book 2023/24](#).

Financial provision enables the use of external legal services where appropriate.

Food and Health & Safety

COVID-19 grant funding provided additional resources to carry out COVID-19 work and backfilling up to 31 March 2023. All catch-up work was completed on time and no additional resource is available for this purpose in 2023/24.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) is entirely self-funding due to the cost-recovery arrangements in place for importers, with no impact being made on the taxpayers of East Suffolk. A full list of charges can be found on the SCPHA website, which are updated yearly to reflect expenses and inflation. Currently, SCPHA's services cost around £5.6m per year to run.

Funding has also been provided until March 2024 by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for two of SCPHA's teams, who are combatting the spread of African Swine Fever (ASF) in a joint operation with Border Force.

Corporate Health and Safety

Corporate Health and Safety Team resources are combined with those of the Food and Safety Team.

Supplying the Council

East Suffolk Council spends around £28 million each year and we are keen to encourage a diverse range of suppliers, both large and small.

As a local council we are not just looking for the biggest companies to supply us, we encourage organisations of all sizes to bid on our tenders. There is something for everyone and we are shaping procurements for all kinds of bidders. [Head to our website for more information.](#)

4.2 Staffing Allocation

Food and Health & Safety

Competent officers are authorised according to the findings of competency assessments based on qualifications, technical knowledge and regulatory experience. Food competencies are assessed in accordance with the FSA's Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance and the Competency Framework.

Our team's current regulatory allocated full time equivalent (FTE) staffing resources are 14.9 FTE, split as follows:

Food Safety enforcement work:

- Total staffing - 11.8 FTE
- Authorised Officers - 9.3 FTE
- Technical Support - 2.5 FTE

Health and Safety:

- Authorised Officers - 2.6 FTE
- Technical Support - 0.5 FTE

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) currently employs just over 100 team members as outlined in appendix 3.

Overseen by the Compliance Manager, the Technical Leads for products of non-animal origin (NAO) are SCPHA's nominated Lead Food Officers, while the Technical Lead for products of animal origin (POAO) is the Senior Official Veterinary Surgeon.

Technical Leads, Official Veterinary Surgeons (OVSS) and Port Health Officers (PHOs) must be sufficiently qualified and authorised according to the Food Law Code of Practice (FLCoP) as key operational decisionmakers. The FLCoP also permits more limited decision-making responsibilities for Authorised Officers (AO) following training and competency assessments, however SCPHA aims to reserve such duties for the most qualified and experienced team members.

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team is managed by the Health and Safety Manager and comprises:

- Health and Safety Manager (0.4 FTE)
- Health and Safety Advisors (1.5 FTE)
- Health and Safety Officer - Housing Maintenance (1 FTE)
- Health and Safety Officer/Trainer - Port Health (0.5 FTE)

The total staffing allocation is 3.4 FTE.

4.3 Staff Development Plan

Our workforce is at the heart of everything we do. One of the ways we support the development and competence of staff is through ongoing training and development provided in-house and externally.

To meet this challenge, we have created an opportunity for five council employees to be apprentice environmental health practitioners. We believe this was the largest number of environmental health apprenticeships starting together in any local authority in 2021/23. It attracted the attention of the professional body (the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health) and much professional news coverage.

This is developing our staff and helping to address the challenge of recruiting environmental health practitioners in the future. Having started with a September 2021 enrolment on the Environmental Health Practitioner Apprenticeship (Level 6), one member of the Food and Safety Team and one member of SCPHA are working in the professional field whilst studying for a degree at the same time. Other recruits are working within Environmental Protection.

In 2021/23, we responded to the FSA's revised 2021 Competency Framework by reviewing the arrangements we have in place against the framework. Officers with responsibility for carrying out official controls maintain their own competency framework record, which is developed as further knowledge and skills are acquired.

We will continue to work in partnership with our colleagues in SCPHA to meet competency requirements, given that we all carry out official controls.

Environmental Health Practitioner Apprenticeship (Level 6)

The four-year course has been developed through consultation with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Institute for Apprenticeships, along with employers from a range of public and environmental health related fields.



Two of our current apprentices,
Nikki Crisp and Hannah Gilson

Food and Health & Safety

Authorised officers in the Food and Safety Team are required to demonstrate Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in line with their membership of relevant professional bodies e.g., CIEH and IOSH.

Officers conducting food safety interventions undertake 20 hours of CPD related directly to food safety each year.

Officers subscribe to an online resource provided by a niche company of food consultants specialising in the training of food law enforcement officers.

In 2021, the Food and Safety Team supported four SCPHA staff to obtain their Higher Certificate in Food Control by providing them with case studies and practical experience to complete their competency development portfolio. Two of these staff members now work within the team and have responsibility for carrying out official controls.

The Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Safety Liaison Group holds an annual training day open to all health and safety regulators across Norfolk and Suffolk.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority's (SCPHA) Technical Trainer develops and delivers programmes with the Technical Leads to keep operational staff up to date with current legislation, best practice and industry standards, while the Business Trainer is responsible for teaching all staff and external parties about SCPHA's IT and business systems.

All newcomers undergo a training schedule suited to their role with continuous development opportunities during their time with SCPHA. Once the trainers and Technical Leads are satisfied with a newcomer's required competencies, authorisation is given for them to take on their duties.

Thousands of courses through Pluralsight, the online education platform, are currently being offered to business and IT team members to promote continuous development, with a view to expanding the offer to all staff depending on its success.

In-line with the Food Law Code of Practice (FLCoP) Competency Framework, SCPHA supports further training opportunities for its staff and recently saw four team members earn the Higher Certificate in Food Control (HCFC). This is in addition to taking on apprentices in environmental health and IT, as well as supporting various team members to complete their environmental health degrees.

Corporate Health and Safety

Corporate Health and Safety Team members undertake CPD in accordance with their membership of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) and/or the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.

Team members are encouraged to attend IOSH meetings and webinars.

We use regular in-house learning and development sessions to update knowledge and maintain competency.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team is a member of the Suffolk and North Essex Occupational Safety Group and the Waveney Safety and Environment Group both of which hold monthly meetings with an education element and Corporate Health and Safety Team members are encouraged to attend when relevant.

One member of the Corporate Health and Safety Team has enrolled on a NEBOSH Level 6 Health and Safety Diploma.

East Suffolk Values...



PROUD

Believing in who we are, what we do and where we live.



GOOD VALUE

Delivering outstanding services, smartly and economically.



TRUTHFUL

Honest and clear in all we do.



UNITED

Whoever we work with, we work as one team.



DYNAMIC

Transforming the future with you in mind.

5.0 Quality Assessment and Internal Monitoring

Food and Health & Safety

The Food and Safety Manager and Lead Food and Safety Officers monitor the work of the Food and Safety Team.

The team has documented procedures for all activities and a designated officer is responsible for reviewing and revising the procedures and maintaining an overview of the team's activities in their area of responsibility.

Environmental Health Technical Support Officers carry out the document control function for the team.

The HSE's LAE1 return is benchmarked at the Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Safety Liaison Group.

Customer feedback is invited via online surveys. A summary of the results is provided in appendix 13. More than 95% of the responses said their business was treated fairly, more than 97% said the contact was helpful and over 94% said communication was clear.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) creates an annual risk-based audit plan to ensure effective and efficient internal processes. This includes a technical audit schedule that tests legislative compliance, as well as best practice and internal policies.

SCPHA is ISO 9001:2015 accredited, which covers imported food controls and is a key performance indicator within East Suffolk Council's performance framework. This saw SCPHA undergo six monthly audits from external auditors to ensure adherence to the quality system.

Opportunities to improve across all areas within SCPHA are sought regularly and fed into reviews to improve knowledge and training provision.

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team has adopted the principles of HSE's HSG65 for health and safety management Plan, Do, Check, Act.

Incident data for the council and its contractors is reviewed by the Health and Safety Committee.

Corporate Health and Safety has been entered as a risk on the Corporate Risk Register and is monitored via the Corporate Governance Group.

A programme of peer review is being considered by all Suffolk Local Authorities.

PLAN DO CHECK ACT



Mobile food traders, including these ones at the Suffolk Show, are inspected by our Food and Safety Team officers.

6.0 Review

6.1 Review against the Service Plan

Managers are responsible for ongoing reviews throughout the year and key reporting on the delivery of the services to the Head of Service and via briefings with the Cabinet Member for Community Health.

The provision of the council's business as usual tasks and projects are monitored, recorded and reviewed against its Strategic Plan.

Food and Health & Safety Service Plans include reviews and reports about the delivery of services. Service plans are submitted to Full Council for review and adoption. The last Food and Health & Safety Service Plan was adopted for the years 2021/23 and contained a review of the year 2019/20. This service plan reviews years 2021/22 and 2022/23. It will be presented to East Suffolk's Full Council on 22 November 2023.

Food and Health & Safety

Our Key Performance Indicator (KPI) dashboards clearly show how we are monitoring performance and delivering against our priorities within the East Suffolk Strategic Plan. We regularly publish in the Communities Theme dashboard the updated KPI Food Hygiene Rating (% at 3-5) i.e., rated 'generally satisfactory' or better.

East Suffolk Food Hygiene Ratings (to April 2023)	Businesses with rating (number)	Businesses with rating (percentage)
5 - Very good	2023	84.8%
4 - Good	271	11.4%
3 - Generally satisfactory	58	2.4%
2 - Improvement required	20	0.8%
1 - Major improvement required	14	0.6%
0 - Urgent improvement required	1	0.0%

Regulatory food safety activities are reported to the FSA via an End of Year Return. Regulatory health and safety activities are reported to HSE via the LAE1 report. Proactive enforcement interventions conducted as part of a project are evaluated at an early stage to ensure that the project is appropriately targeted at non-compliant businesses.

In 2021/22 and 2022/23 the Food and Safety Team:

- conducted over 98% of the food interventions which were due or overdue in category A to D food businesses
- determined that over 90% of the food businesses inspected were broadly compliant with food safety regulations
- obtained 225 food, water and shellfish samples
- responded to the discovery of illegally imported products of animal origin from by the Police and Suffolk Trading Standards during a multi-agency 'stop and check' campaign in Lowestoft. We removed almost 100kg of illegal meat from the UK food chain and ensured it was disposed of safely
- assisted Suffolk Trading Standards and APHA in detecting and reporting poultry birds being kept outside within an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone
- introduced a new, single set of skin-piercing byelaws across East Suffolk Council.
- liaised with the East of England HPT (part of the UKHSA) to request members of the public cooperate with medical personnel to receive the necessary medical attention to treat a tuberculosis (TB) infection. Failure to take medication for this illness can cause further spread of this infection to other members of the community. These requests are made to control and prevent the spread of TB which could present a risk of significant harm to human health
- submitted quarterly and annual End of Year Returns to the FSA. A summary is provided in appendix 14
- submitted an annual LAE1 return to the HSE. A summary of the activity is provided in appendix 16.



Appendix 15 sets out additional food and health & safety statistics for 2021/23 including:

- skin piercing and tattooing registrations
- health and safety complaints, advice, and assistance
- asbestos notifications
- reports of lifting equipment defects.

The Food and Health & Safety Service Plan reported, as of September 2021, a backlog of 337 newly registered food establishments that had arisen because staff resources had been redeployed to manage the risk of COVID-19 spreading and, having regard to FSA guidance to local authorities, our food safety intervention programme was largely paused except for higher food safety risk concerns. In 2022/23 we moved at a faster pace and conducted 474 food interventions of newly registered food business establishments, eliminating the backlog and ending the year 2022/23 with just 16 new food businesses to inspect.

The Food Hygiene Rating (% at 3-5) KPI was consistently above the 95% target.

In 2023/24 we are continuing to contribute to the Strategic Plan by:

- adopting skin piercing byelaws for East Suffolk based on national model byelaws
- submitted an annual LAEMS return to the FSA. A summary is shown in appendix 16. In line with FSA guidance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic the food intervention programme was reduced. Interventions of higher risk food businesses in categories A and B continued to be a priority. The inspection of lower risk categories was largely paused.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

The overarching review for the delivery of the service plan is undertaken by East Suffolk Council. Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) also runs an ongoing performance monitoring programme to capture more localised feedback.

Corporate Health and Safety

The Corporate Health and Safety Team meets fortnightly and has scheduled reviews of the internal team workplan which feeds into the Strategic Plan.

We report to CLT annually on achievements and matters of concern.

6.2 Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan

Food and Health & Safety

Two new Lead Food and Safety Officer posts have been created to oversee operational management of the Food and Safety Team's functions. The Food and Safety Team Manager now undertakes a more strategic role than previously. A new Regulatory Support Officer post has been created to assist authorised officers.

The Food Safety Level 2 Award in Food and the Healthy Eating Award Scheme remains paused.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) has experienced significant variance since 2020 while responding to and recovering from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While trade has begun to return to normal volumes over the last year, SCPHA may see changes to its services as the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) looks to introduce new import controls for EU goods from October 2023 as part of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM).

Corporate Health and Safety

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in changes in the way services have been delivered across the council. The Corporate Health and Safety Team has been flexible and able to support teams through their new ways of working.

The Annual Cycle process where team leaders were required to submit returns throughout the year to document that they had completed health and safety tasks was a record of activities but was not an effective tool to assist team leaders to successfully manage health and safety. Due to restrictions in the software a request for assistance would not usually be received by the Corporate Health and Safety Team until the end of the year. A new management system has been introduced with the Health and Safety Advisors now working with and alongside team leaders throughout the year.

6.3 Areas of Improvement

To support the use of our on-line forms we will introduce an automatic message telling the customer how they can use alternative contact methods if they have difficulty with completion.

Food and Health & Safety

Ways of working that were developed during the COVID-19 pandemic have been reviewed and those that have been shown to be an improvement have been kept in place. For example, using remote inspection techniques where appropriate, prioritising work according to risk and using the website to signpost businesses and customers to further guidance and self-help tools.

The Food and Safety Team is continuing to introduce and improve document automation to improve the clarity and consistency of Food Safety and Hygiene Intervention Reports and other documentation provided to our customers.

We are continuing to add online forms to our website for our customers to use.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

The next evolution of Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority's Port Health Interactive Live Information System (PHILIS), NEOMA, is currently being created by SCPHA's dedicated team of IT developers. This will use cutting-edge technology, such as artificial intelligence, to increase the efficiency of port health operations and cut down on waste.

Currently, PHILIS is outsourced to the majority of Britain's port health authorities, with ongoing support and maintenance provided by SCPHA's IT team. Over time, NEOMA is expected to replace PHILIS in these instances, greatly expanding SCPHA's IT services.

As the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) looks to introduce new import controls for EU goods from October 2023 as part of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM), SCPHA may need to undergo a major service development.

Corporate Health and Safety

Corporate Health and Safety Team operates a management process whereby the Health and Safety Advisors are allocated service areas and will support those teams, becoming the "go to" person on health and safety matters for the managers in that department.

The new post created in the Port Health Team to be a dedicated health and safety resource to review and revise the existing procedures and to risk assess and train port health team members has been extended for 12 months. This post sits within the Corporate Health and Safety Team but focuses specifically on SCPHA.

“ A few words from our apprentice, Hannah Gilson

I started working for Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority in the June of 2016, as a Port Health Assistant. Over the years the role has developed to meet the needs of the ever-changing demands within Port Health and as a result my role is now an Authorised Officer.

I work within a team of fifteen authorised officers, our role is so varied and there are never two days the same. We deal with correspondence from external organisations, examinations on imported goods, document checks and authorisation of selected goods coming into the country. There are times when certain goods do not fall within our remit and on those occasions, they are passed on to the Port Health Officers and the Official Veterinarians within Port Health.

Two years ago, I applied to undertake an apprenticeship programme through Port Health and East Suffolk Council and was lucky enough to be selected after an interview process. The course is a degree, in Environmental Health, provided by Weston College, which I do as a distant learner. The lecturers are highly skilled and have a vast knowledge of the subjects that I am studying. As it is an apprenticeship the lecturers can call upon students to offer up their knowledge as well, which makes the course very current and a great way to learn. The modules that I have studied have been interesting and varied - some of the topics that I have looked at have been outbreak control under the food module, noise pollution under environmental protection, and human anatomy under public health.

Although I rarely make it to Weston-Super-Mare, due to the distance, I have been fortunate enough to undertake the course with four other apprentices from East Suffolk Council, who work in other areas of environmental health. We have at times been able to work together on some of the assignments and have helped each other when it has been needed. I have found this a great help and support knowing that there are others that I can turn to, who are going through the same experience as me and I thank East Suffolk for doing that.

I have come to the end of my second year with two more to go, and over the summer periods when not at college the 'off the job' hours of the apprenticeship still need to be honoured, and Port Health and the Environmental Health Officers from the Food and Safety Team have provided me with lots of opportunities for learning and guidance. Last summer I shadowed some of the Food and Safety Officers on their visits to businesses to assess whether they had complied with food hygiene standards. I have also shadowed Port Health Officers when they have undertaken ship sanitation inspections and sampling goods that I do not usually get to see. I hope to do more shadowing this summer so I can get ready for year three which looks to be as exciting as the other two.

Hannah Gilson

Environmental Health Apprentice



A few words from our apprentice, Nikki Crisp

Back in the summer of 2021, whilst still in the midst of the Covid pandemic, I was offered the opportunity to undertake a Level 6 Apprenticeship in Environmental Health with a view to becoming a fully qualified Environmental Health Practitioner. The apprenticeship would involve learning on the job and studying remotely with Weston College in Weston-Super-Mare. The tutors had become quite adept at remote learning during the pandemic and were offering the course to both full time students and apprentices alike with a commitment to delivering the majority of the course remotely.

My team release me to study one day a week where I attend lectures remotely via Teams, with occasional travel to Weston Super Mare to meet up with the other apprentices on the course to partake in workshops, field studies or intensive classroom learning. Online lectures to date have covered a variety of topics across environmental health law, food safety, microbiology, air quality, noise pollution and a range of public health topics. There's even been some geology and some anatomy and physiology in there so it's a far broader topic than it might seem.

Fast forward two years and I am now halfway through said degree having completed six modules including passing the CIEH professional qualification – the food identification exam, an important step in qualifying as an EHP. It has been quite an intense 2 years - I've also taken on the role of Regulatory Support Officer in my team, so I've been learning new skills and applying my studies to my new role, and vice versa. Year 3 of my apprenticeship will cover topics including housing and health and safety as well as health promotion so lots more learning opportunities to come and interesting assignments to complete.

It can be hard to juggle assignments around a busy job, particularly coming out of the pandemic with the FSA Recovery Plan targets and a backlog of inspections and related work to get through, as well as the challenge of a new role in the team, plus factoring in children and busy family life. That said, remote learning works really well in this respect and affords the opportunity for East Suffolk to 'grow their own' which might not have been possible with face to face training and limited offerings in this part of the country. I don't think I would have been able to commit to the course, and fit it around family life and work, if it wasn't offered in this way. It's hard to believe I'm halfway through the course already, it really has gone so fast.

Nikki Crisp

Environmental Health Apprentice and
Regulatory Support Officer



7.0 Caring for our Environment

Our service area's work supports East Suffolk Council's Strategic Plan commitment to 'put the environment at the heart of everything we do'. In particular, we contribute to the Plan's environment priority areas of 'Leading by example' and 'Minimise waste, reuse materials & increase recycling'.

The current East Suffolk Council Environment Policy will be updated in late 2023; this service plan will aim to incorporate any relevant changes to this policy where required.

Food and Health & Safety

All work is allocated in such a way as to minimise travelling distances.

Team members work from home, avoid unnecessary travel by car and have "paperless" work procedures.

Meetings and training events are conducted online wherever possible.

Alternative enforcement strategies are used, where applicable, reducing the need to visit businesses (refer to appendix 19). Remote interventions are conducted where suitable and appropriate.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority (SCPHA) runs a mix of hybrid and electric vehicles when team members need to travel across the Port of Felixstowe and to different operational sites, such as Harwich International Port. Where possible, team members are also given the option to work from home as part of a hybrid pattern, further reducing carbon emissions and improving work-life balance.

Following legal consultation over what can serve as official import notifications, SCPHA is now able to accept digital import documents and significantly cut down on paper-based hardcopies. SCPHA aims to digitise more import documentation over the coming years, with its in-development document processing software, NEOMA, aiding the process greatly by using cutting-edge technology such as artificial intelligence.

Corporate Health and Safety

Corporate Health and Safety Team promotes the efficient and responsible use of the natural environment when giving advice and during policy development.

Our team members work from home, have “paperless” work procedures and avoid unnecessary travel by car.

Corporate Health and Safety Team promoted the use of tablets by all Housing Maintenance operatives (over 80 people) to aid communication, ensure safety information is current and available at all times and to reduce the volume of paper risk assessments and method statements which were previously carried in each vehicle.

Single use personal protective equipment is avoided when other alternatives are available.



We work hard to care for our environment and keep East Suffolk looking its best.

Abbreviations

AO	Authorised Officer
APHA	Animal and Plant Health Agency
BCP	Border Control Posts
BPDG	Border and Protocol Delivery Group
BTOM	Border Target Operating Model
CIEH	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease: an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CLT	Corporate Leadership Team
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EMM	Enforcement Management Model
EoEHPT	East of England Health Protection Team
FHRS	Food Hygiene Rating Scheme
FLCoP	Food Law Code of Practice
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
FSA	Food Standards Agency
HAVS	Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome
HRFNAO	High risk food of non-animal origin
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
HIP	Harwich International Port
HMI	His Majesty's Inspectorate
HMRC	His Majesty's Revenue and Customs
HSWA	Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
HPT	Health Protection Team
ICA	Import Control Assistant
ICT	Information and Communications Technology

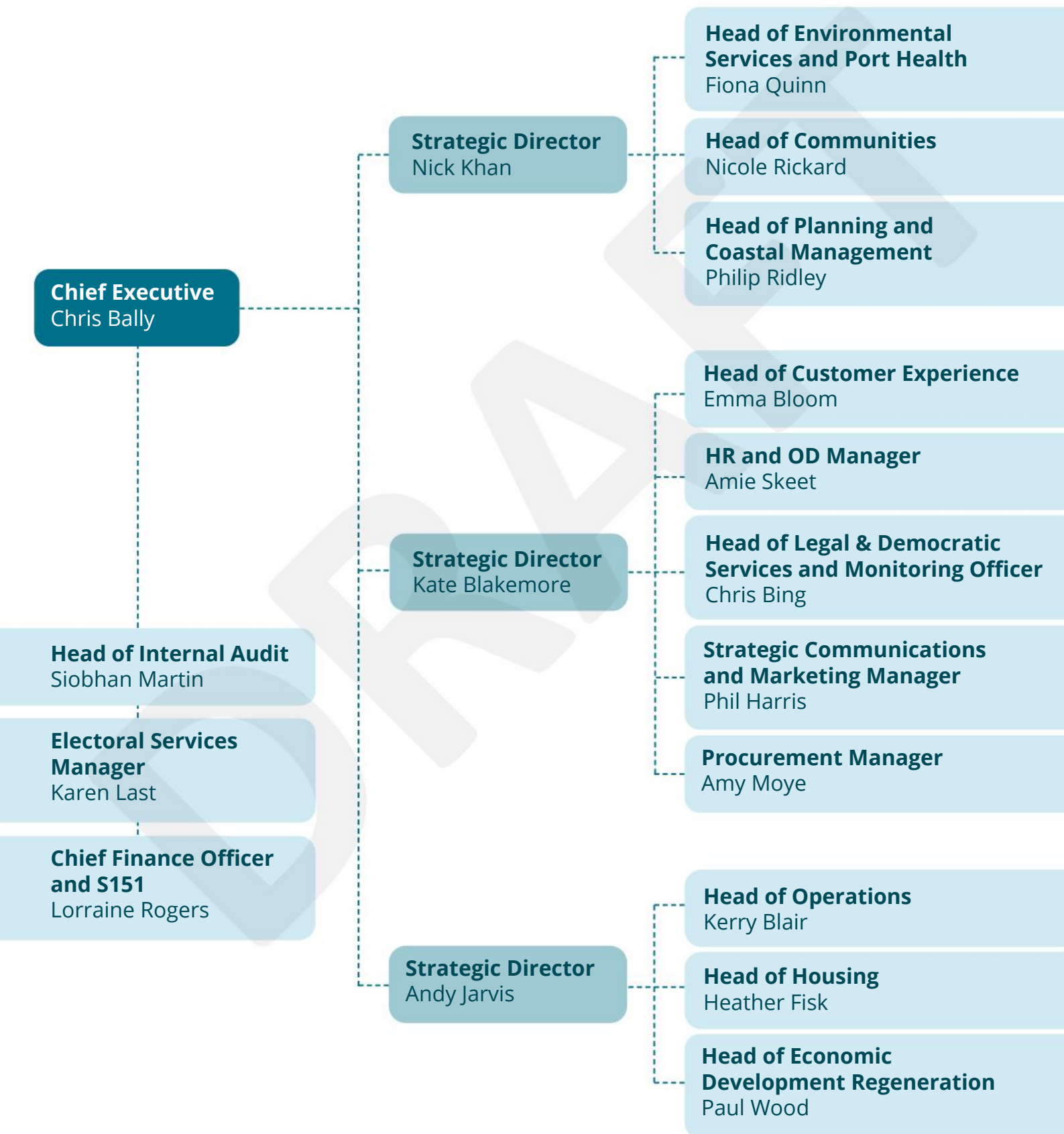
ABBREVIATIONS

IFCA	Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
IOSH	Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
LAC 67/2	Local Authority Circular (revision 12) guidance issued under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
LAE1	Annual return to the Health and Safety Executive on local authority health and safety intervention and enforcement activity
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MHRS	Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency
NAO	Non-Animal Origin
NSHSLG	Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Safety Liaison Group
OVS	Official Veterinary Surgeon
PHO	Port Health Officer
PoAO	Products of Animal Origin
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
RSPH	Royal Society for Public Health
PHA	Port Health Authority
PHSI	Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate
SAG	Safety Advisory Group
SPDB	Strategic Plan Delivery Board
SCPHA	Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority
SME	Small or Medium-sized Enterprise
TEU	Twenty-foot equivalent unit
UKHSA	UK Health Security Agency

Appendices

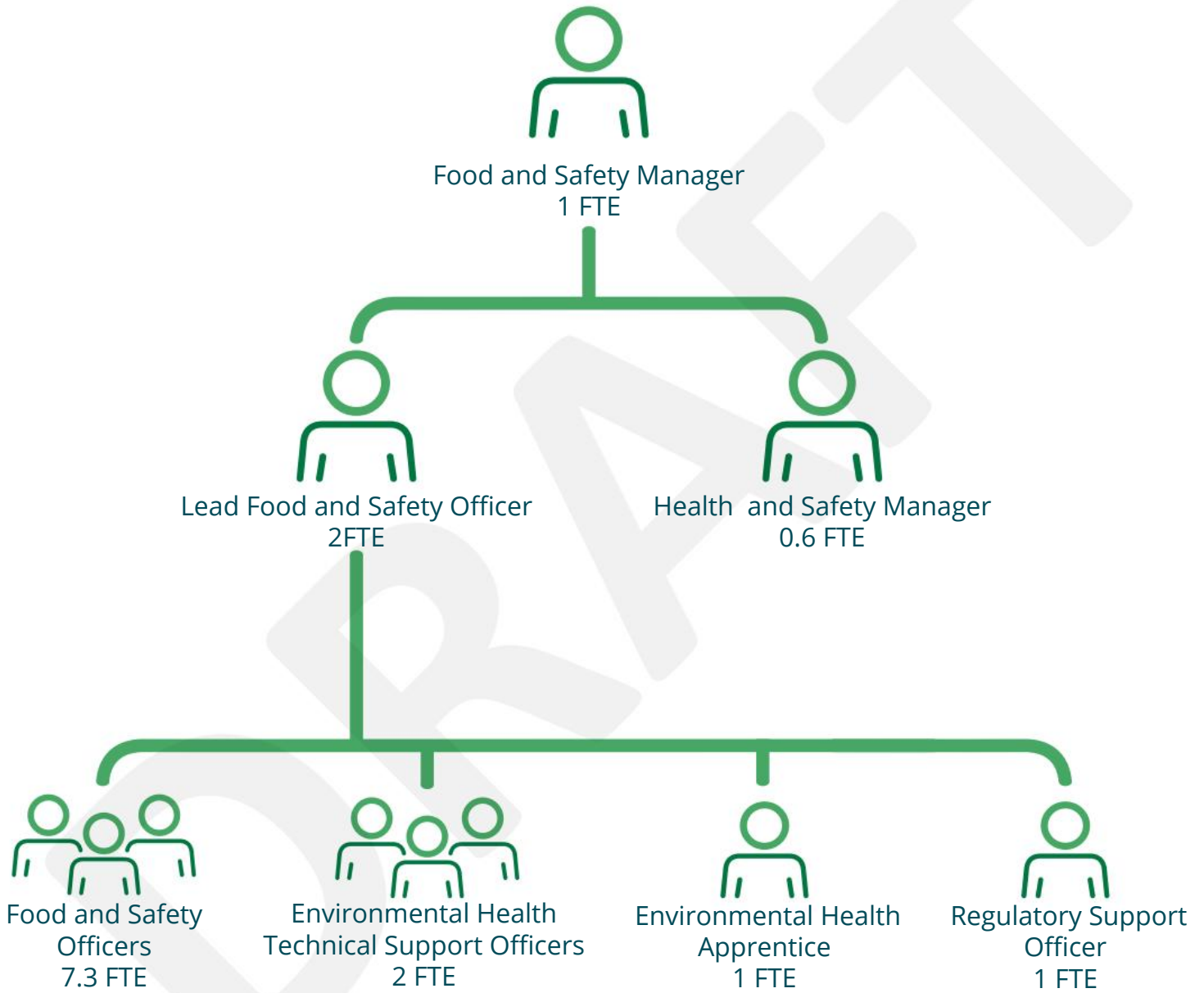
Appendix 1

Corporate management structure.



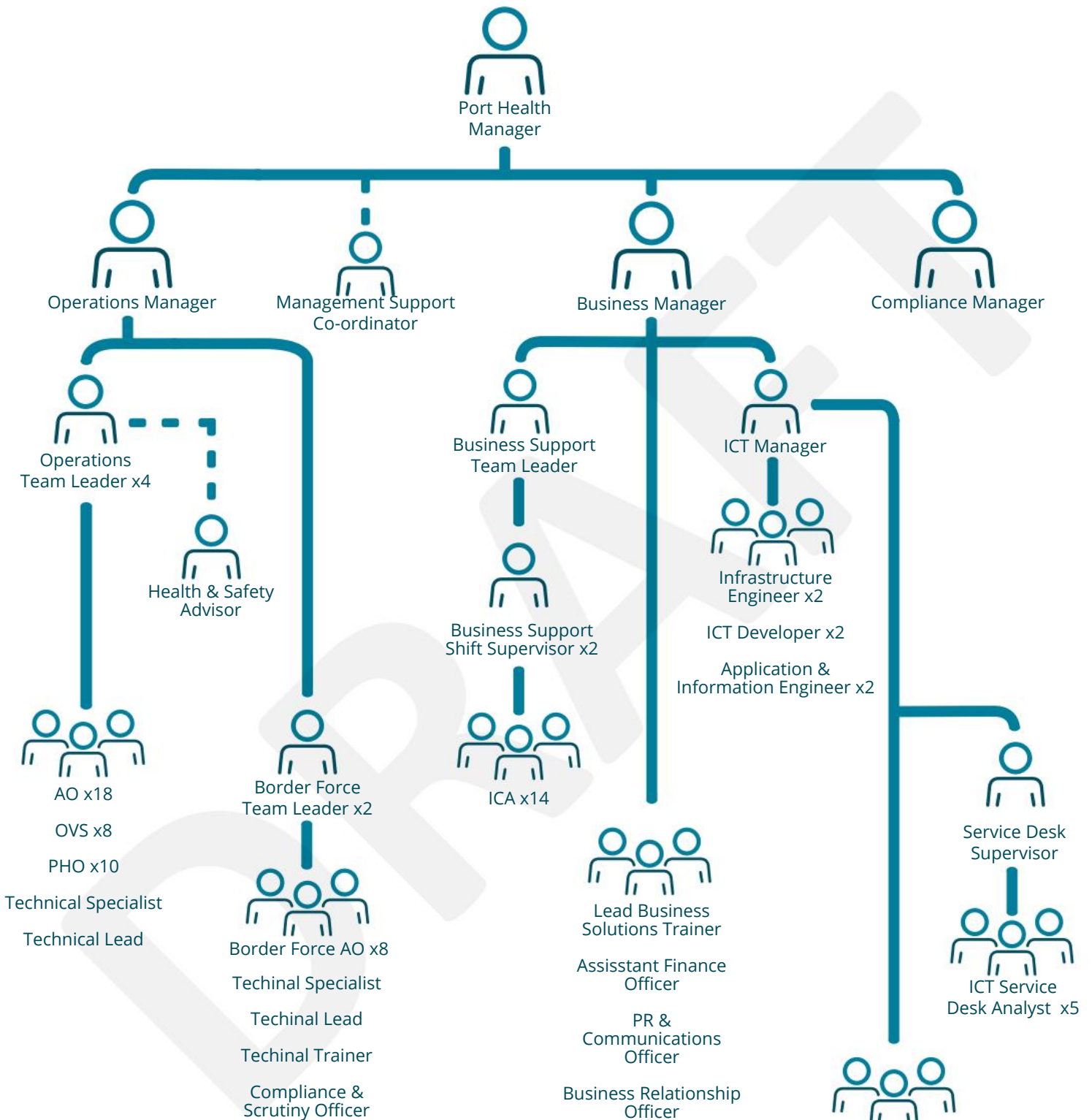
Appendix 2

Food and Safety Team organisational chart.



Appendix 3.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority organisational chart.

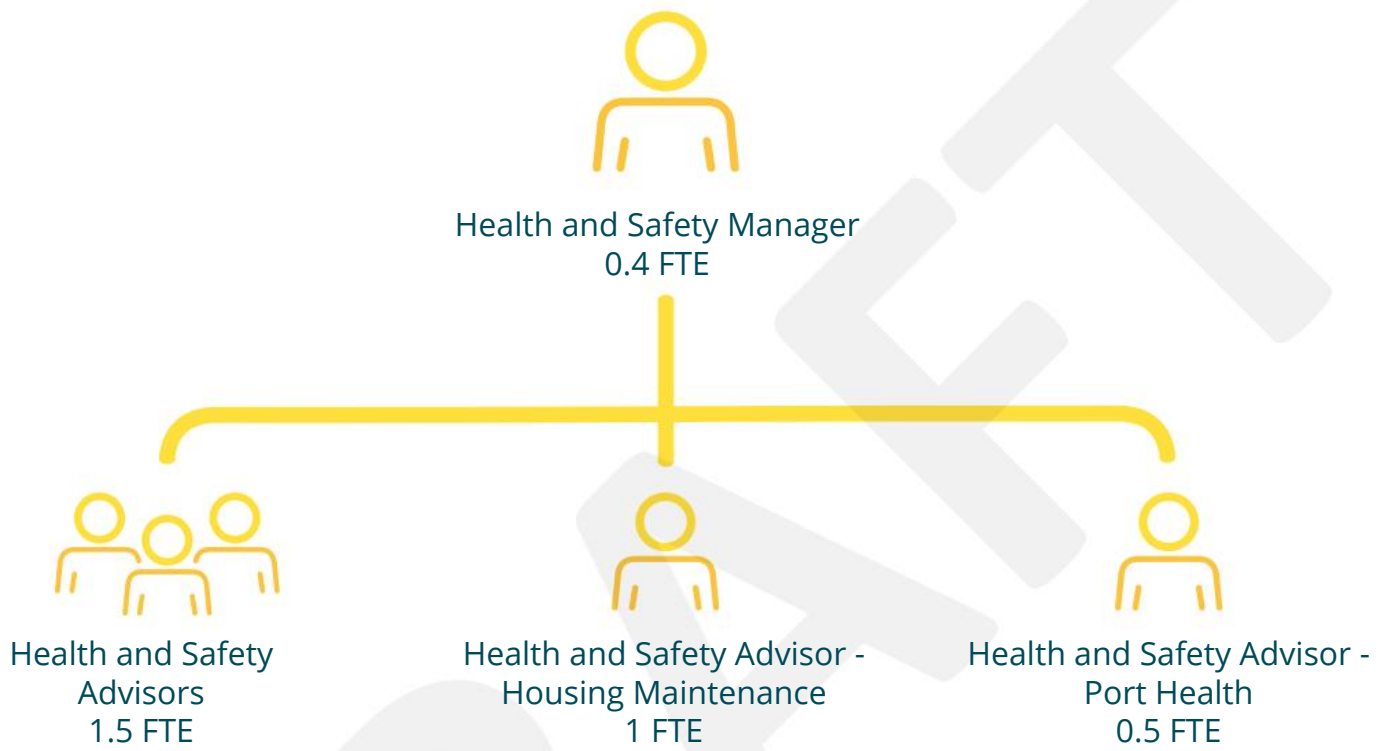


Job title key:

- ICA - Import Control Assistant
- AO - Authorised Officer
- OVS - Official Veterinary Surgeon
- PHO - Port Health Officer

Appendix 4

Corporate Health and Safety Team organisational chart.



Appendix 5

Profiles of food establishments in East Suffolk according to risk at 1 April 2023.

Source: End of year return 2022/23

	A	B	C	D	E	New registrations	Outside	Total
Total in category	2	74	360	1011	1215	16	317	2995*

*This shows an increase of 125 food businesses in East Suffolk from 2021/23.

Appendix 6

Outline of projected food safety and health and safety service demands in 2023/24.

Table 1 - Food hygiene interventions due to 31 March 2024.

Category	Interventions (number)	Estimated time per intervention (hours)	Total time for interventions (number x hours)
A	2	6	12
B	72	6	432
C	222	4.5	999
D	640	3.5	2240
E	69	2.5	172.5
New Registrations*	400	4.5	1800
Total	1405	n/a	5655.5

*estimate

Table 2 - Other food safety and health and safety activities in 2023/24 (estimated).

Activity	Number of Activities	Time per Activity (Hours)	Total time
Lowestoft Port Health Authority Ships sanitation inspections	43	3	129
Revisits - food safety	21	2.5	52.5
Complaints - food	175	2	350
Food, shellfish and water samples	80	3	240
Gastrointestinal disease suspected case notifications anticipated requiring follow up	85	2.5	212.5
Food alerts for action	5	37	185
Requests for food safety advice/assistance	348	1.5	522
Export certificates/premises endorsements	50	2	100
Skin piercing registrations - premises	20	5	100
Skin piercing registrations - personal	40	3.5	140
Asbestos Notifications	15	3.5	52.5
Health and safety priority topic awareness raising work	2	40	80
Health and safety advice/assistance	50	7	35
Health and safety complaints	56	3	2
Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations - reports of defects involving an existing or imminent risk of serious personal injury	5	7	35
Smokefree enforcement	1	2	2
Freedom of Information/Environmental Information Regulations requests	20	10	200
Authorised officer Continuing Professional Development	20	12	240
Health and safety priority topic enforcement work, public events, Temporary Event Notices, pavement licences, imported food, other enforcement, report writing, myConversations, procedure updating, officer training and development, peer review, team meetings, student training, providing information and returns to government departments, auditing, media enquiries, service plan preparation, website updating, recruitment, working groups etc.			Work to be Prioritised

Appendix 7

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority's outline of current and projected service demands.

Please note that all figures are approximations.

Port of Felixstowe consignments (April 2022 to March)			
	Current	Projected 2024 increase based off current BTOM info	Total including projection
Products of Animal Origin (PoAO)	19,502	9,171 to 57,200	28,673 to 76,702
High risk food of non-animal origin (HRFNAO)	5,462	0	5,462
Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing (IUU)	3,397	250	3,647
Plastic	535	NYK	NYK
Organic	950	NYK	NYK

Harwich International Port consignments (April 2022 to March 2023)			
	Current	Projected 2024 increase based off current BTOM info	Total including projection
Products of Animal Origin (PoAO)	0	9,404 to 76,800	9,404 to 76,800
High risk food of non-animal origin (HRFNAO)	45	0	45
Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing (IUU)	250	600	850
Plastic	0	NYK	NYK
Organic	1	NYK	NYK

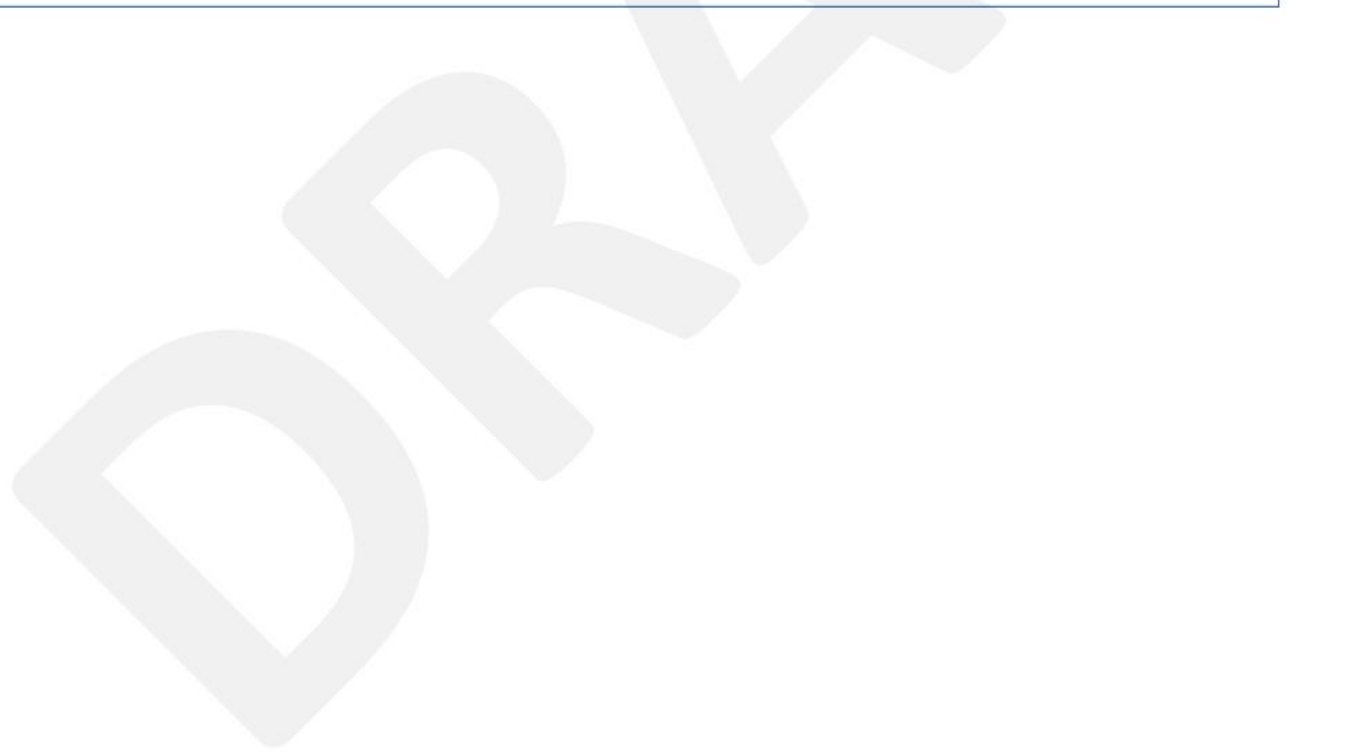
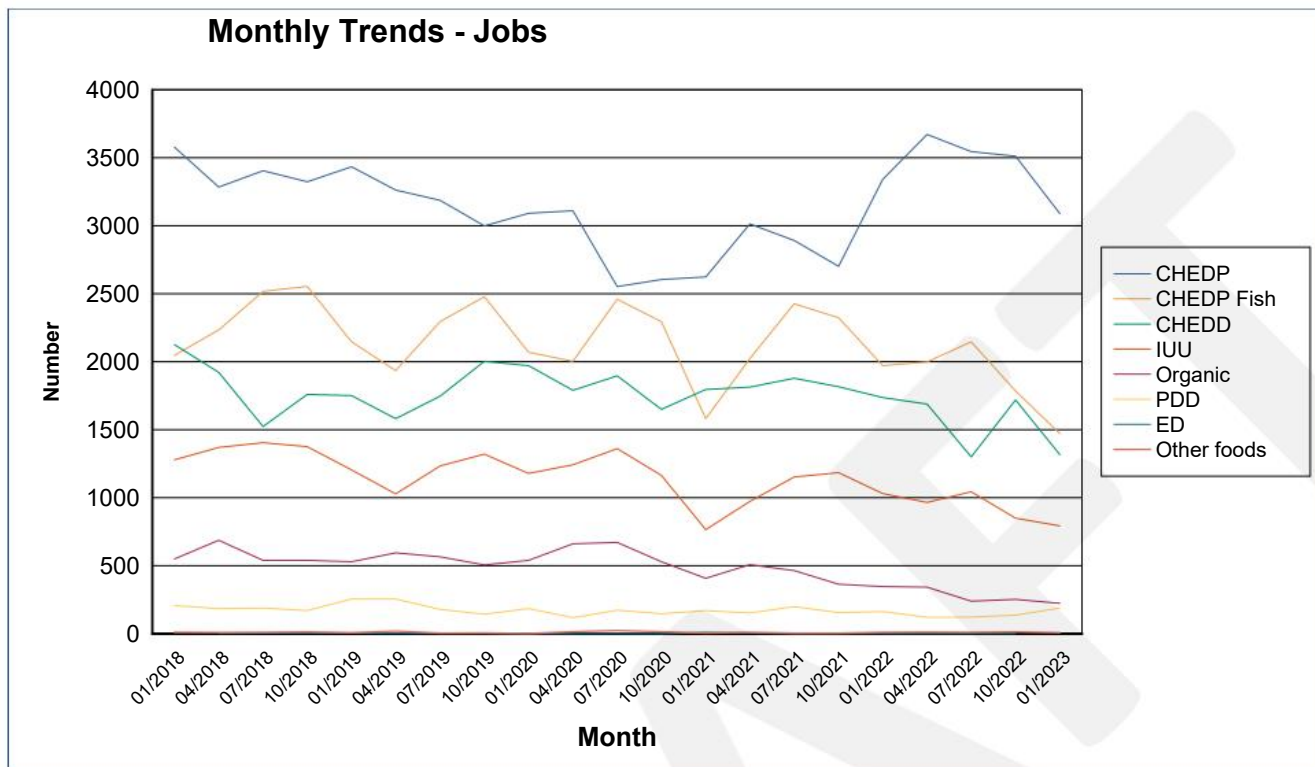
Total consignments (April 2022 to March 2023)			
	Current	Projected 2024 increase based off current BTOM info	Total including projection
Products of Animal Origin (PoAO)	19,502	18,575 to 134,000	38,077 to 153,502
High risk food of non-animal origin (HRFNAO)	5,507	0	5,507
Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing (IUU)	3,647	850	4,497
Plastic	535	NYK	NYK
Organic	951	NYK	NYK

NYK: Not yet known

Appendix 8

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority outline of service activities.

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority service activities (April 2022 to March 2023)	Products of Animal Origin (POAO)	Products of Non- Animal Origin (NAO)
Checks performed at point of entry into the UK		
Number of food consignments entering the Port	24,782	26,641
Percentage of manifests checked	100%	100%
Document checks for food consignments	24,396	25,418
Identity checks for food consignments	12,394	1,367
Physical checks for food consignments	3,382	1,280
Document checks for food consignments at external temporary storage facilities	0	0
Identity checks for food consignments at external temporary storage facilities	0	0
Physical checks for food consignments at external temporary storage facilities	0	0
Rejected food consignments	142	77
Reasons for rejection		
Microbiological contamination	0	4
Other contamination	0	2
Composition	1	31
Labelling	44	3
Other	97	35
Rejected consignments subject to:		
Destruction	67	48
Special treatment or processing	0	3
Re-dispatch	75	22
Repurpose excluding human consumption	0	4
Sampling activities		
Samples taken for microbiological examination	62	60
Unsatisfactory samples from microbiological examination	6	6
Samples taken for chemical/compositional analyses	352	1,097
Unsatisfactory samples from chemical/compositional analyses	5	68
Other samples taken	59	85
Other unsatisfactory samples	3	5
Formal enforcement		
Notices served	142	77
Voluntarily surrendered goods	145	0



Appendix 9

Food Sampling Policy - Food and Safety Team.

This food sampling policy is made available to businesses and consumers in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice. We recognise the contribution sampling can make to the protection of public health and food law enforcement functions. We are committed to providing the resources necessary to carry out a sampling programme. Trained Authorised Officers are responsible for undertaking our food sampling functions and we have a food sampling programme for microbiological and algal toxin purposes. Food sampling is prioritised to concentrate upon one or more of the following criteria:

- foods which are produced within East Suffolk
- the risk ratings of the premises
- any local, regional or national coordinated sampling studies
- shellfish classification and algal toxin monitoring.

The majority of samples taken are for the purpose of monitoring, surveillance and intelligence gathering. Samples may be formal, informal or both according to circumstances. They are taken in compliance with the relevant Code of Practice and consideration of our Compliance and Enforcement Policy. Official laboratories as designated by the FSA are used for samples obtained during the sampling programme.

The UKHSA laboratory, London, the council's Public Analyst(s), CEFAS laboratories at Lowestoft and Weymouth and other accredited laboratories are used for the analysis of samples.

The FSA funds sampling credits used for the analysis of food samples submitted to the Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Laboratory (UKHSA), London. Algal toxin examinations carried out by CEFAS are carried out at no charge to the local authority. The local authority has a budget to fund the analysis of shellfish classification samples as this is not funded by the FSA.

Samples may be taken during manufacturing/production processes, for the purposes of ensuring food safety and for ensuring the effectiveness of the critical controls in the process. Sampling may include swabs taken from surfaces where they are sent to an official control/accredited laboratory. The food business operator will be notified of the result of any such sample analysis or examination.

We do not currently act as the Primary Authority for any food business, but we act as the home authority for businesses where the relevant decision-making base of an enterprise is located within East Suffolk's area. Where sampling identifies a problem with food manufactured outside the districts, the relevant primary, home or originating authority will be notified, and a copy of the certificate of analysis or examination forwarded to them.

Food sampling will not normally be undertaken as a constituent part of a food safety intervention. It may take place if, during the intervention, the authorised officer identifies a particular problem that needs further investigation.

Samples of food received as a food complaint may require microbiological examination, chemical analysis or expert identification.

Where a particular premises or food produced in the District is implicated with a case or cases of foodborne disease, food samples may be taken and submitted for examination, for the purpose of identifying any likely source of infection and controlling any risk to public health.

Food samples may be taken and submitted as part of a special investigation e.g., in response to a food hazard warning, or to other intelligence received about potential food safety issues.

The sampling of shellfish and river water in commercial shellfish production areas is conducted in coordination with the FSA and CEFAS for the purpose of maintaining the necessary classifications for those areas and for monitoring the risk of algal toxins. Shellfish and river water is sampled from shellfish beds and their associated depuration plants.

Appendix 10

Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority outline of sampling activities 2021/22 and 2022/23.

PASS - Wolverhampton	707
Food & Environmental Research Agency	255
SGS Cambridge Limited	533
Kent Scientific Services	134
UKHSA	99
Other	157
Total	1,885

Appendix 11

Gastrointestinal disease confirmed cases in East Suffolk 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Table 1 – Gastrointestinal disease confirmed cases in East Suffolk, April 2021 to March 2023.

Source: East of England HPT, UKHSA

Laboratory reports	2021/22	2022/23
E coli O157 VTEC	6	0
Salmonellosis	18	32
Giardiasis	9	9
Shigella dysentery	2	3
Total	45	52

Table 2 – Gastrointestinal disease confirmed cases in East Suffolk, April 2021 to March 2023, rate per 100,000 population.




Source: East of England HPT, UKHSA

Laboratory reports	2021/22	2022/23
E coli O157 VTEC	14.81	0.00
Salmonellosis	44.42	78.98
Giardiasis	22.21	22.21
Shigella dysentery	4.94	7.40
Total	111.06	145.61

Appendix 12

Key liaison organisations, including:

- government departments, agencies and public bodies
- operational and service delivery organisations
- other organisations and working groups.

	- Food and Safety Team
	- Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority
	- Corporate Health and Safety Team

			
Animal and Plant Health Agency	✓	✓	
Associated British Ports	✓	✓	
Border and Protocol Delivery Group		✓	
Border Force		✓	
BSI – British Standard Institute		✓	
Business Associations	✓	✓	
Cabinet Office		✓	
Campden BRI	✓		
Care Quality Commission	✓		
Chambers of Trade and Commerce	✓		
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	✓	✓	
Commercial bodies, traders (imports / agents), liaison groups, trade bodies		✓	
Courts and Tribunals Judiciary (including Coroner and Coroner's Office)	✓		
DEFRA Imports and Exports Division	✓	✓	
DEFRA International Trade Division		✓	
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy	✓		
East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust	✓		✓
East of England Health Protection Team, part of the UK Health Security Agency	✓	✓	
Eastern Region Corporate Health and Safety Group			✓
East Suffolk Council's Corporate Teams e.g. HR, finance legal services, licensing, planning and building control	✓		
Environment Agency	✓		
Fire and Rescue Service	✓		✓
Food and Environmental Research Agency		✓	
Food Standards Agency	✓	✓	
Food, Water and Environmental Microbiology Services, part of the UK Health Security Agency	✓	✓	

			
Forestry Commission		✓	
Health and Safety Executive	✓		✓
His Majesty's Inspectorate		✓	
His Majesty's Revenue and Customs		✓	
Home Office Security Industry Authority	✓		
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities	✓		
Institute of Occupational Safety and Health	✓		✓
Laboratory of the Government Chemist		✓	
Local authorities and port health authorities	✓	✓	✓
Marine Management Organisation	✓	✓	
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	✓	✓	✓
Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency		✓	
National Health Service	✓		✓
New Anglia Growth Hub	✓		
Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Safety Liaison Group	✓		
Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)	✓		
Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate		✓	
Public Analysts	✓	✓	
South East Shellfish Liaison Group	✓		
State Veterinary Service		✓	
Suffolk and North Essex Occupational Safety Group			✓
Suffolk Constabulary	✓		✓
Suffolk Food Liaison Group	✓		
Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit	✓		
Suffolk Public Health	✓	✓	
Suffolk Resilience Forum	✓		
Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership	✓		
Suffolk Trading Standards	✓	✓	
Waveney Safety and Environment Group			✓

Appendix 13

Customer satisfaction in 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Business satisfaction responses: 75 in 2021/22* and 133 in 2022/23						
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I felt my business was treated fairly	2021/22	78.67%	17.33%	1.33%	1.33%	1.33%
	2022/23	79.70%	18.80%	0.00%	0.75%	0.75%
I felt the contact was helpful	2021/22	75.68%	21.62%	1.35%	0.00%	1.35%
	2022/23	84.21%	14.29%	0.00%	1.50%	0.00%
Communication was clear	2021/22	76.32%	18.42%	5.26%	0.00%	0.00%
	2022/23	82.71%	15.79%	0.00%	0.75%	0.75%

*SurveyMonkey was paused in 2021/22 due to the COVID-19 epidemic.

Appendix 14

Summary of food interventions, enforcement actions and compliance data for East Suffolk in 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Source: End of Year Return

Food safety interventions		2021/22	2022/23
<p>Total % of interventions achieved by premises category. Interventions include inspections and audits, verification and surveillance, sampling visits, advice and education visits, and information/ intelligence gathering.</p>	A	100%	100%
	B	97%	100%
	C	90%	99%
	D	93%	98%
	E	36%	26%
	New Registrations	260 (number)	474 (number)
Other activity		2021/22	2022/23
% food businesses broadly compliant with legislation		92%	97%
No. of establishments subject to:			
Written warnings		852	606
Improvement Notices		0	0
Emergency Prohibition Notices		0	0
Prohibition Orders		0	0
Voluntary closures		1	1
Seizure, detention and surrender of food		0	0
Remedial Action Notices		0	0
Prosecutions		0	0
Simple cautions		0	0
Suspension/ revocation of approval		0	0
Samples taken		87	138
Complaint investigations - food		139	116
Complaint investigations - hygiene of premises		99	90

Appendix 15

Food safety and health and safety additional statistics for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Activity	2021/22	2022/23
Service requests		
Food safety advice/assistance	349	346
Food registrations/changes to registrations	434	372
Ship sanitation certificates	56	19
Food Export Health Certificates and Attestations	13	49
FHRS safeguards		
Revisit requests	20	22
Right to Reply requests	0	0
Appeals - upheld	0	0
Appeals - not upheld	1	2
Appeals - over 21 days	0	0
Early publication of FHRS rating	4	2
Skin piercing registrations		
Skin piercing registrations - premises	13	21
Skin piercing registrations - personal	30	40
Health and safety advice/assistance/complaints		
Health and safety advice/assistance	34	50
Health and safety complaints	54	58
Asbestos		
Asbestos Notifications (ASB5)	33	1
Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations reports		
Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations - reports of defects involving an existing or imminent risk of serious personal injury	2	6
Freedom of Information/Environmental Information Regulations requests		
Freedom of Information/Environmental Information Regulations requests	62	20
Events notifications requiring assessment and, where necessary, further investigation/comment		
Public events	88	177
Temporary event notices and pavement licences	483	623
Event premises licences	110	116

Appendix 16

LAE1 local authority health and safety return summary 2021/22 and 2022/23.

LAE1 criteria	2021/22	2022/23
Proactive inspections	50	22
Non-inspection interventions	18	15
Any other targeted contact (not face to face) to educate, advise or engage duty holders	86	148
Reactive visits	61	36
Revisits following earlier intervention	0	1
Improvement Notices	0	2
Deferred Prohibition Notices	0	0
Immediate Prohibition Notices	0	3
Simple cautions	0	0
Prosecutions resulting in conviction	1	0

Appendix 17

Summary of food interventions data for East Suffolk 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Food safety interventions	Premises category	Interventions carried out in 2021/22	Carried forward	Interventions carried out in 2022/23	Carried forward
Total number of interventions carried out by premises category.	A*	10	0	8	0
	B*	96	3	80	0
	C*	332	26	226	3
	D	844	109	428	14
	E	238	234	197	274
	New registrations*	260	80	474	11

*Food Standards Agency priorities required by COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

Interventions include inspections and audits, verification and surveillance, sampling, advice and education visits, and information/intelligence gathering.

Appendix 18

Corporate complaints received in 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Corporate complaint statistics: 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023					
		Total complaints	Justified	Unjustified	To be determined
Food and Safety Team	2021/22	4	0	4	0
	2022/23	0	0	0	0
Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority		<p>To solve customer concerns swiftly, SCPHA accept complaints about its services directly via email. These complaints are investigated by staff independent to the import(s) in question.</p> <p>If the customer is not satisfied after an investigation has concluded, they are directed to the East Suffolk Council complaints system, with potential for review from another service area if required.</p>			
Corporate Health and Safety Team	2021/22	0	0	0	0
	2022/23	0	0	0	0

Appendix 19

Food and Safety Team Alternative Enforcement Strategy for low-risk food establishments.

This Alternative Enforcement Strategy (AES) sets out the arrangements adopted by East Suffolk Council for conducting official controls at food establishments rated as low risk in accordance with the Food Standards Agency's Food Law Code of Practice (FLCoP) and Practice Guidance.

Low-risk food establishments are defined as those with a category E food hygiene rating, as detailed in Annex 1 of the FLCoP.

The AES is not used for food establishments subject to approval under Retained EU Law Regulation No 853/2004 or those which export food. Establishments subject to approval or those exporting food, including those with a category E food hygiene rating, are subject to official controls at a frequency appropriate for their food hygiene rating in accordance with Annex 1 of the FLCoP.

Food establishments with a category E food hygiene rating, which are not broadly compliant with relevant food legislation, are subject to official controls until they achieve a broadly compliant standard. An establishment is considered broadly compliant if it achieves a minimum food hygiene rating of 10/10/10 for the level of (current) compliance for hygiene/structure/confidence in management and control procedures, as detailed in Annex 1 of the FLCoP.

All newly registered (and unrated) food business establishments are subject to an initial inspection in accordance with Chapter 4 of the FLCoP. These establishments are risk rated in accordance with Annex 1.

The AES does not preclude official controls of low-risk establishments: full inspections, partial inspections and/or audits of low-risk establishments may be undertaken where these are East Suffolk Council's preferred intervention option. Official control interventions may be conducted at establishments subject to the AES where there has been:

- a consumer complaint
- planning or building regulation applications
- an infectious disease notification
- changes in activities or management
- a non-return of a questionnaire
- insufficient information returned by questionnaire
- a food alert requiring action.

Questionnaires are sent to appropriate category E establishments within 28 days of the due date for the intervention. Upon return, completed questionnaires are assessed by an Authorised Officer (AO) for any significant changes to the establishment's arrangements and/or activities including:

- changes of food business operator and/or management
- changes in food operations such that the inherent risk or hygiene risk to public health may have increased
- major changes to the structure/layout of the premises.

Where questionnaires are not returned by the establishment within 28 days or require further investigation to establish whether significant changes have occurred, the AO will contact the premises by email or by undertaking a monitoring or surveillance visit to obtain the required information.

The risk rating of category E food establishments is reviewed by an AO after every episode of surveillance in accordance with the AES. Where there are no changes, the AO will enter the same risk-rating onto the database, thus ensuring the establishment remains on the food hygiene intervention programme. The FSA's Food Hygiene Rating for the food establishment remains unchanged.

Official control interventions will be conducted in low-risk establishments in accordance with Chapter 4 of the FLCoP and in any or all of the following circumstances:

- insufficient information has been returned on the AES questionnaire
- significant changes to the food establishment have occurred
- the risk appears to have changed.

Surveys and project-based interventions of low-risk establishments are conducted in accordance with national, regional and local needs, initiatives and priorities.

Records of all AES activities are maintained on East Suffolk Council's food and safety database and the information gathered is used to maintain up to date records of all low-risk food establishments.