



**Horsham
District
Council**

Commercial Team
Service Plan
2023/2024

Environmental Health & Licensing Department

Food Safety and Health & Safety at Work

Service Plan - 2023/2024



This document is available in alternative formats upon request, such as large print or electronically. Please contact the Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial Team) on email paul.hobbs@horsham.gov.uk telephone 01403 215421

CONTENTS		
1	Introduction	Page 3
2	Service Aims & Objectives	Page 5
3	Demands on the Service	Page 8
4	Service Delivery	Page 23
5	Resources	Page 30
6	Quality Assessment	Page 33
7	Review	Page 35
Appendix 1	Horsham District Background	Page 36
Appendix 2	Organisational Chart	Page 37



1. INTRODUCTION

This is the annual Service Plan for the Environmental Health Commercial Team. The Commercial Team are the enforcing authority for food safety and health & safety at work activities in certain commercial business premises within the Horsham District.

Horsham's Environmental Health Service was not alone to the impacts of COVID-19.

From March 2020, nearly all Environmental Health resources were diverted to providing advice, guidance, and enforcement in respect of the COVID-19 business restrictions, investigation and controlling outbreaks of coronavirus in workplaces, schools, care homes, etc. throughout the Horsham district.

This is the first Service Plan since 2019/20.

Food Safety

This Service Plan has been produced in response to the Food Standard Agency's Framework Agreement on Food Law Enforcement which sets out how the plan should be structured and what the plan should contain.

During lockdown the food team were unable to undertake programmed food hygiene inspections. Consequently, we fell behind with our scheduled food inspection programmes.

In addition, we also witnessed an unprecedented number of new business registrations during the lockdown period, more than 300 new food businesses set up. The majority were home based catering businesses created as people either became unemployed or put on furlough.

Accordingly, this plan has been produced in accordance with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) COVID-19 Recovery Plan. This plan lays out a roadmap to recovery to enable local authorities to recommence their food regulatory delivery system which were severely impacted during the pandemic.

The plan provides guidance and advice to local authorities for the period from 1 July 2021 to 2023/24. The plan recognises that local authorities will be experiencing a heavy backload of routine and reactive work, the aim is to support local authorities to concentrate on our highest risk establishments while providing greater flexibility for lower risk establishments. Eventually the plan will enable us to move on towards something more manageable as we progress.

The Recovery Plan states that local authorities should ensure that they have documented and approved service plans in place that set out how they intend to deliver and resource their planned interventions and other activities during the COVID-19 recovery period.

The plan also sets out an expectation that LAs move at a faster pace where there is an ability to do so. Horsham has embraced this approach and we have pushed on where feasible.

This service plan also considers of the requirements set out in the Food Law Code of Practice, the Practice Guidance, and the Framework Agreement.

Health & Safety

Each local authority is also required to produce and make available an annual Health and Safety Service Plan, which details that Local Authority's priorities, aims and objectives for the enforcement of health and safety.

The 2020 Coronavirus Act and ensuing secondary legislation, as well as official government coronavirus guidance resulted in an unprecedented impact on the working population in the UK.

During the COVID-19 pandemic we adapted our health & safety service to be as flexible and effective as possible given the restrictions we all faced.

Working in partnership with the Police, public health colleagues and others we helped businesses operate safely using different approaches, to comply with the plethora of UK Government COVID-19 rules.

2. SERVICE AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Horsham District Council's Commercial 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 a health and safety enforcement responsibility.
- To support businesses by providing food/health export certification.
- To provide advice and assistance to businesses and consumers

Regulators Code

The Regulators' Code has statutory effect under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and provides a clear, flexible, and principles-based framework for how we as regulators should engage with those we regulate.

The Regulators Code states that we should avoid imposing unnecessary regulatory burdens on those we regulate through our regulatory activities. We are required to support businesses and choose proportionate approaches, based on relevant factors including, for example, business size and capacity.

Horsham District Council Corporate Plan Priorities

Protection of public health is our priority but at Horsham, we have a history of working with local businesses to encourage regulatory compliance and improved standards by enablement through regulation.

In many cases, improvements in the management of occupational health and food safety lead to cost savings through reduced food poisoning, workplace accidents and ill health.

One of the Councils main objectives is to encourage local businesses to work together to promote the local economy and we are proud to have assisted many of our local businesses to improve and prosper. We believe that the best way to protect people is not just through legal compliance but also by continuous improvement.

Enforcing legal standards when necessary

Where advice and support fail to produce results we have a wide range of formal powers to tackle offences and non-compliance ranging from:

- Fixed penalty notices for smoking offences,
- Improvement Notices for food safety and health & safety at work
- Prohibition of work activities, equipment or processes that present imminent risk
- The control of infectious disease or contamination using powers that can be exercised in the Health Protection (Local Authority Powers) Regulations 2010
- Closure of business premises
- Prosecution for serious breaches of the law

Risk based approach

We have always followed this principle to ensure we focus our efforts to protect the most vulnerable by dealing with the worst offenders as a priority.

Working with other relevant stakeholders

To deliver our services effectively we work closely with many national organisations, including the Food Standards Agency (FSA), Health and

Safety Executive, (HSE) UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA), Office of Product Safety & Standards (OPSS), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), etc.

In addition, we also work closely with our local authority colleagues throughout Sussex on numerous countywide forums sharing knowledge, experience and expertise. We actively participate in pan Sussex projects and incentives to raise awareness among the Sussex Business communities.

We also work closely with other departments within Horsham District Council including Planning, Building Control, Economic Development, Legal Services, etc.

This Service Plan is in conjunction with -

- Horsham District Council Corporate Plan Priorities 2019-23
- Horsham District Economic Strategy 2017-2027
- The Environmental Health and Licensing Department's Service Plan 2023/2024

3. DEMANDS ON THE SERVICE

Officers within the Commercial Team deliver the service in conjunction with a wide range of environmental health functions in commercial premises. The Commercial Team routinely operate during office hours, with some inspections or investigations conducted out of hours if necessary.

Management Information System

In April 2022 Horsham switched its Management Information Systems from Idox Uniform to a Cloud-based application, SAAS Agile Places. All our business property data was migrated in time for the new financial year.

Horsham District Council was the first Environmental Health service in the country to implement the Agile software system. The software was purchased in the full knowledge that it hadn't yet been tested or fully adapted for food inspections within a council.

We experienced some technical issues as result of the data migration to the new system which caused concern on how accurate the data transfer was especially when we completed the Local Authority 'Temperature check' surveys. Consequently, the issue was addressed as a priority by manually comparing data held by the two separate systems.

Agile have a contractual obligation to provide reporting for all statutory returns, including the FSA end of year return.

Cross Boundaries

The Commercial Team cross several service boundaries in the following main areas:

- Food hygiene enforcement duties may coincide with and/or facilitate health and safety enforcement duties.
- Enforcement of Smokefree legislation to protect the health of employees and members of the public in the workplace and public places

- Licensing and inspection of skin piercing establishments such as tattooists, acupuncturists, etc.
- Investigation of cases and outbreaks of notified infectious diseases, other than food poisoning incidents.
- Enforcement of the SunBeds (Regulation) Act 2010 which prohibit under 18s from using tanning salons and sunbeds
- Pleasure Boat Licensing for operators of a boat or vessel for carrying passengers for hire.
- Consultation on planning and building control applications, which permits a 'health and safety' and 'food safety' input at the planning stage of development
- The Team act as a Statutory Consultee on all premises licence applications made under the Licensing Act 2003
- Investigation of nuisance complaints in commercial premises relating to, drainage, noise & odour
- Licensing and inspection of animal boarding establishments, dog breeding premises, zoos, pet shops, horse riding establishments, the keeping of dangerous and wild animals and enforcement of the microchipping of dogs

Food Hygiene Inspection Programmes

The frequency of inspections of food businesses is determined by a food safety risk rating given to it at the last programmed inspection. Guidance on the rating system is contained in the Food Law Code of Practice

- Category A rated premises inspected at least every 6 months,
- Category B premises at every twelve months
- Category C premises at least every 18 months.
- Category D premises at least every 24 months
- Category E premises every 3 years.

The FSA allow Enforcement Authorities to adopt an alternative inspection programme for low-risk premises (Category E) however to receive a Food Hygiene Rating these premises must receive a physical inspection.

As from the 1st of April 2023, the Council's database showed a number of 1241 food business in the Horsham District broken down as follows:

Type of Premises	Number
Primary Producers	19
Manufacturers/Packers	46
Importers/Exporters (EU)	0
Importers/Exporters (3rd Countries)	0
Distributors/Transporters	44
Retailers	202
Caterers, Restaurants, Pubs, etc	930
Total	1241

The premises on the Council's database fall into the following risk rating categories:

Category	Number
A	0
B	22
C	168
D	480
E	509
New premises not yet rated	62
Total	1241

2023/24 Food Service Programme

461 programmed food hygiene inspections are due to be undertaken in 2023/2024. This number will increase as new businesses register during the year.

The premises due for inspection fall into the following risk rating categories:

Category	Number
A	0
B	16
C	111
D	207
E	108
New premises not yet rated	19
Total	461


The bulk of the food premises fall under the scope of Regulation (EU) No. 852/2004, as applied by the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013. This lays down general hygiene requirements.

However, there are some food businesses, where certain food is processed into meat products, dairy products or fishery products and then sold “other than to the final consumer”. This means that the food is supplied wholesale or to other retail or catering outlets and then sold to the public.

These premises come under the scope of Regulation (EU) No. 853/2004, as applied by the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations. This lays down specific hygiene rules for products of animal origin. Such premises require Product Specific Establishment Approval from the local authority for the specific processed food and are given an Approval Number which is incorporated in an oval shaped Identification Mark.

Horsham’s unique approval code is **HJ**.

The Council currently has eight approved establishments operating in the district:

	1 Meat Products Establishment
	2 Establishments approved for both Meat & Fishery Products
	4 Egg Packing Establishments
	1 Dairy Products Establishment

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

The Food Standards Agency's (FSA) national scheme provides consumers with information about hygiene standards in food businesses at the time they are inspected.

The standards are judged on three key factors observed during the inspection:

- How hygienically the food is handled (how it is prepared, cooked, re-heated, cooled and stored);
- The condition of the structure of the buildings (the cleanliness, layout, lighting, ventilation and other facilities); and
- How the business manages and records what it does to make sure food is safe.

The level of compliance with the food law found is rated on a scale. At the bottom of the scale is '0' – this means urgent improvement is required. At the top of the scale is '5' – this means the hygiene standards are very good.



The highest rating is achievable in every food business. At the time of writing this Service Plan, over 91% of all businesses within the Horsham district have already received scores in the top two tiers of the scale, being either '4 – Good' or '5 – Very Good'.

Food businesses in England are not legally required to display their rating at the premises. Ratings are however, displayed on the FSA website for the public to view.

Evidence suggests that a poor rating has a negative impact on trade and food businesses have come to appreciate that a good score is good for business.

Business awarded a rating of less than five, are entitled to request a re-rating inspection providing they have undertaken the necessary improvements highlighted at the programmed inspection.

We are now able to make a charge of £160.00 to any business who applies for a re-visit.

Food/Health & Safety Advisory Visits

As part of our commitment to the Better Regulation agenda to support businesses and promote local growth, we offer food businesses the option to request a visit at any time. Reasons for requesting an advisory visit might be:

- Pre-start-up advice to new businesses
- Advice on how to improve Food Hygiene Rating, or how to maintain a current Food Hygiene Rating of 5
- Advice on proposed building works or alterations to food premises
- Expert advice on any new or proposed food manufacturing
- Help with statutory food safety or occupational safety documentation

Although we have no statutory duty to provide advisory visits, we always make every attempt to assist businesses who request our advice.

We offer a limited amount of free advice but where businesses require time-consuming detailed expert assistance, we have always recommended that they seek the services of a food safety consultant.

Consultants operating in the private sector can be expensive and businesses do not always receive the correct advice.

We have recognised that we as a Council have the expertise to offer bespoke advice at cost recovery, which represents value for money.

Businesses who want to do the 'right thing' often see the regulator as being the ideal source of advice and evidence suggests that businesses value the services they pay for.

The guidance given during visits is informal and does not bind the council in any future decision it makes. However, our experience in the enforcement of regulation means that business can be confident that they are doing the 'right thing' providing they follow our advice.

The cost of an advisory visit is £ £240.00 and includes a 2-hour consultation, follow up reports and supporting documentation. There is an additional charge of £78.00 per hour any visits that exceed 2 hours.

Food Export Certificate Service



Brexit has provided us with an opportunity to offer a new service of providing export health certificates to businesses exporting food abroad.

We have set up a service that can be offered to any business in the UK. We are now registered with DEFRA who have supplied us with our own unique export stamps. All members of the food team have now successfully completed a Food Competent Certification Officer qualification giving us authorisation to inspect & certify foods as being safe and issue food export certificates

We charge a fee of £35.00 per consignment for this service

During 2022/23 we processed 43 Food Export Health Certificates bringing in an income of £1505.00

Food Inspection and Sampling

Food sampling and environmental swabbing at food premises is an integral part of our food hygiene interventions to verify hygiene standards, processes, and food safety systems.

UK Health Security Agency is funded to provide an allocation for the microbiological sampling of food and water samples in the Horsham District

We actively participate in proactive National and European Community Co-ordinated Food Sampling Programmes and surveys organised by Sussex Food Liaison Group.

Details of the national sampling plan for 2022/23 are:

- **STUDY 77: Ready to Eat (RTE) Salad and salad components from Retail and Catering.** Collecting food samples to assess microbiological quality of salad products from both retail and catering premises.
- **STUDY 78: Hygiene in Catering Premises.** Taking swabs of equipment & surfaces to collect and use microbiological data to assess environmental hygiene and cleaning standards in catering premises.

Reactive food sampling is also used to investigate routine food complaints and food poisoning incidents



Food Alerts, product withdrawals and recalls

The FSA provide local authorities with Food Alerts, which give information on potentially hazardous foods. The FSA detail what if any

specific action is required to protect consumers. Categories of Food Alerts are:

- 'Food Alert for Action',
- 'Food Alert for Information',
- 'Recalled from Customers'
- 'Withdrawn from Sale'.
- 'Allergy Alerts',

We take appropriate action as requested and often work in partnership with colleagues from Trading Standards at West Sussex County Council. There is very close liaison between various enforcing bodies. The FSA send out Food Alerts electronically direct to the Council.

Partnership Working with Trading Standards

We will continue to work with colleagues at both West Sussex County Council Trading Standards and East Sussex County Council Trading Standards to raise awareness among local businesses on a range of regulatory issues including food safety, alcohol licencing, etc.

Primary Authority Partnerships.

Horsham are an award winning, well established, and nationally recognised Primary Authority (PA).

PA allows businesses to enter into a legal agreement with one local authority (LA) which will act as a single point of contact for local regulation.

The LA provide advice, guidance, and an informed view on the interpretation of legislation to the businesses, which they can rely on.

When being inspected by another LA the regulator cannot ask the business to do anything different. The general idea is to promote consistency of enforcement across the country.

The Environmental Health Department at Horsham have ten PA partnerships to provide a single point of guidance and legal advice on food safety and health & safety.

We have four direct partnerships include a meat products manufacturer, a registered charity & two restaurant chains.

In addition, we have six coordinated partnerships which include three trade associations representing high street food retailers & barber shops and three food safety consultants acting as a coordinator for several caterer's



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Office for Product
Safety & Standards

Our partners and areas of legislative advice provided	
Organisation	Scope
National Craft Butchers	Food Safety
Craft Bakers Association	Food Safety/Health & Safety
D&D London Limited	Food Safety/Health & Safety
Boparah Restaurant Group	Food Safety/Health & Safety
Food Hygiene Solutions	Food Safety/Health & Safety
Chichester Biltong	Food Safety
Cancer United	Food Safety/Health & Safety
The Society of Food Hygiene and Technology (SOFHT)	Food Safety/Health & Safety
Lloyd's Register Group	Food Safety/Health & Safety
British Master Barbers	Health & Safety

NATIONAL
★ CRAFT ★
BUTCHERS



FOOD
HYGIENE
SOLUTIONS



The Food Safety Team from Horsham District Council's Environmental Health Department was once again recognised at the Regulatory Excellence Awards 2022 at the Chartered Trading Standards Institute Conference in Bristol.

The accolade awarded by the Department for Business Energy and Strategy (BEIS) recognises regulatory organisations for achieving positive outcomes through good practice. The categories in which Horsham were successful were 'Unsung Hero' and 'Leadership in Regulatory Services'



Photo: Paul Hobbs, Principal Environmental Health Officer from Horsham District Council collected the awards from Sarah Smith Deputy Director for Regulatory Delivery at Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.



Photo: Winners at the Office of Product Safety & Standards annual Regulatory Excellence Awards in June 2022.

The Environmental Health Team from Horsham District Council were among those individuals, teams, local authorities, and businesses that have made a significant contribution to protecting people and places and supporting business

Health and Safety Inspection Programmes

There is no statutory requirement for non-food businesses to register with the Council unless they require a licence, permit to trade, etc (premises selling alcohol, taxis, dog boarders, skin piercers, etc).

The environmental health database does not hold a record of the non-food businesses located in the district. According to the latest statistics on the National Online Manpower Information System (Office for National Statistics; UK) official census and labour market statistics there are 7,620 enterprises in the Horsham district. 90.6% are micro businesses with 0 – 9 employees

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted our scheduled health & safety projects for 2021/22, it did provide an opportunity to interact with local businesses due to the relaxation of business closure and restriction rules set out in the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020.

We used this opportunity to help local businesses plan and prepare for reopening by offering guidance with risk assessments, how to manage social distancing, face coverings, cleaning & disinfection, etc.

Although COVID-19 remains a public health issue, the HSE no longer expects every business to consider COVID-19 in their risk assessment or to have specific measures in place. Employers may still choose to continue to cover COVID-19 in their risk assessments.

The planning and frequency of inspections of business premises for health and safety compliance is determined by LAC 67/2 (rev 12) which provides LAs with guidance and tools for priority planning and targeting their interventions, enabling them to meet the requirements of the National Local Authority Enforcement Code (the Code).

The Code allows us to construct our own work plan to deliver specific outcomes. We can use our local intelligence to determine specific local priorities and poor performers, by identifying the key risks of serious workplace accidents, injuries, and ill health in the community.

Our target in our last published Service Plan 2019/20 was to concentrate on health and safety provision at the care homes within the district. This was due to an investigation by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and

Sussex Police which highlighted safety concerns in a care home provider in our area at that time.

Post COVID-19 pandemic reports suggest that care home staff suffered higher levels of work-related stress and burnout, exacerbated by staff shortages where staff had to isolate due to the virus. We aim to continue with our plan to target health and safety provision in the care sector.

The project will consist of a series of initiatives to highlight employee health and wellbeing to reduce work related stress. raise health and safety awareness, deliver solutions, improve compliance, and ultimately protect the health and safety of the workforce.

We will still investigate complaints and workplace accidents were appropriate. We will take enforcement action if necessary were there are serious breaches of legislation or blatant disregard to health and safety.

Continued Health & Safety Support to Local Businesses.

We will continue to help and support businesses, particularly small medium enterprises (SMEs), by providing clear, accessible, and relevant advice. This should facilitate proportionate, appropriate, and effective risk management and improve health in the workplace.

Partnership Working

We are active members of the Sussex Health & Safety Liaison Group, and we continue to take active participation in the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) which is a multi-disciplinary working group involving numerous Sussex agencies including the Police, Fire Brigade, Licensing, Emergency Planning, etc. The group holds regular meetings to discuss safety issues at planned events, festivals, carnivals, etc.

4. SERVICE DELIVERY

Food Safety

In 2022 /2023, the Commercial Team inspected the following numbers of food businesses:

Category	Number
A	1
B	16
C	99
D	167
E	69
Unrated	119
Total	471

Food Complaints

Consumer food complaints dealt with in accordance with departmental policy and procedures.

Food Premises Complaints	
Hygiene of premises	9
Hygiene practices	39
Total	48

Food Product Complaints	
Foreign body	17
Poor quality	4
Unfit	1
Labelling	1
Food alleged to have causes illness following consumption	3
Total	26

- No prosecutions taken
- One Hygiene Improvement Notices (HINs) issued
- One voluntary closure was taken

Food sampling Projects Undertaken 2022/23

We actively participated in the UK Health Security Agency sampling project to test for microbiological safety of the microbiological quality of Sushi/Sashimi from catering and retail premises. These products have previously been associated with an increased number of Listeria detections in fish-based products.

We also undertook routine sampling of food products manufactured by local businesses to assess microbiological safety.

Samples Taken & Reasons		Result	Follow-Up Action
Air dried Parma type ham, salted and dried at ambient temp and sold as RTE	Routine sampling – to validate drying process	Satisfactory	Business advised of results
Chorizo - home cured in fermenting chamber using starter cultures	Routine sampling – to validate fermentation process	Satisfactory/ Borderline	Business advised of results
Home cured salami, dried and fermented raw RTE sausage using starter cultures	Routine sampling – to validate fermentation process	Satisfactory	Business advised of results
2 samples of RTE Fermented Venison Salami	Routine sampling – to validate fermentation process	Satisfactory	Business advised of results
2 sushi samples from a national supermarket	the UK Health Security Agency sampling project	Satisfactory/ Borderline	Business advised of results
2 sushi samples from a high street take-away	the UK Health Security Agency sampling project	Satisfactory	Business advised of results
Total samples taken			9

FSA Food Alerts

The FSA issues information about product withdrawals and recalls letting consumers and local authorities know about problems associated with food. Food safety Officers assess potential impact of Food Alerts on the local area.

Horsham successfully assisted the FSA with 2 local food recalls involving Horsham based businesses last year for the recall of bottled wine and confectionary products.

Infectious Disease Control

The UKHSA aims to detect possible outbreaks of disease and epidemics as rapidly as possible.

The primary objective in outbreak management is to protect public health by identifying the source and implementing control measures to prevent further spread or recurrence of the infection

Local Authorities have a duty to work with UKHSA to respond to incidents that present a threat to the public health.

The Commercial Team undertake investigations on receipt of reports of infectious disease cases from the UKHSA.

Cases of infectious diseases reported & investigated in 2022/2023

Infectious Disease	Numbers
Campylobacter	150
Cryptosporidium	5
Escherichia coli (VTEC)	15
Giardiasis	12
Hepatitis A	1
Hepatitis E	1
Salmonella	17
Shigella	5
Suspected Food Poisoning	3
Other	1
Total	210

Health & Safety

In 2022/2023, the Commercial Team undertook the following numbers of health & safety interventions of local businesses:

Category	Number
Proactive Inspections	35
Non-proactive visits/face to face contacts	70
Non-inspection interventions or contacts	142
Visits to investigate complaints	34
Visits to give advice	8
Follow up visits/revisits	5
Total	294

60 accident notifications were received under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) – an assessment made on receipt to determine nature of accident, level of seriousness, whether the business has a history of accidents, etc.

Asbestos

The Department continues to receive numerous enquiries from members of the public, employers, asbestos contractors and others with duties under asbestos regulations. We give expert advice & guidance regarding controls to prevent exposure to asbestos.

Food Safety and Health & Safety Training Courses for Businesses

In 2022 /2023, the Commercial Team ran several accredited training courses for food handlers engaged at local businesses & voluntary organisations

Food Safety Full One Day Course		
Date	Number Candidates	Results
12/05/2022	11	All passed
14/07/2022	10	All Passed
22/09/2022	10	All Passed
23/02/2023	4	All passed
Successful Candidates		35

Food Safety Update Half-Day Course		
Date	Number Candidates	Results
12/05/2022	3	All passed
02/03/2023	4	All passed
Successful Candidates		7

Health & Safety Full One Day Course		
Date	Number Candidates	Results
02/03/2023	8	All passed
Successful Candidates		8

Licensing

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 has had a major impact on the Commercial Team resources taking a full time Officer away from front line duties for a significant period.

The new legislation replaced some existing animal licensing regimes and introduced regulations for activities not previously covered (i.e., dog crèches, exotic pets, internet sales etc.)

The new regulations required us to develop new mandatory conditions that apply to licences issued to authorise the different licensable activities.

- Breeding Dogs
- Boarding Cats
- Boarding Dogs in Kennels
- Dog Day Care
- Exhibition of Animals
- Hiring out Horses
- Home Boarding of Dogs
- Guidance for Selling Animals as Pets

In addition, each establishment required inspection under the new regime and are risk rated against a standard 14-point criteria checklist, which considers several factors relating to compliance history, complaints, welfare standards and management standards. This scoring system determines a risk rating level.

Licences issued are for a period of either one, two or three years depending on the risk rating and level of compliance. This regime also introduces a Star Rating for each establishment.

Licenses have been issued for the following:	
Home Boarders of Dogs	52
Selling Animals as Pets	5
Dangerous Wild Animals	1
Dog Breeders	11
Boarding Cats	7
Boarding Dogs in Kennels	5
Day Boarding	4
Boarding both Cats & Dogs	4
Hiring out of Horses	10
Exhibition of Animals	1
Total	100

Planning Applications

In 2022/23, the Commercial Team responded to over 70 Planning Application Consultations. This involves visits, noise surveillance, analysing acoustic data, providing expert advice on mechanical extract ventilation systems, meetings with applicants, agents and consultants.

Premises Licence Applications

Also in 2022/23, the Team consulted on 24 Premises Licence Applications and over a hundred Temporary Event Notices. This involves visits, noise surveillance, analysing acoustic data, providing expert advice, attending Licensing Hearings, meetings with applicants, agents and consultants.

Promoting our Service

The Commercial Team has taken a proactive approach to help promote awareness and inspire actions for safer food to both the public and local businesses.

We have produced YouTube videos promoting our Advisory Visits and raised awareness on the importance of food allergen management.

We have also delivered numerous messages on the Councils social media post

5. RESOURCES

Financial Allocation

The Council has made the following budgetary allocation for Food Hygiene in 2023/24.

EXPENDITURE HEAD	£
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	259,160
SUPPORT SERVICES	1,956
GROSS EXPENDITURE	261,116
TOTAL INCOME	12,000
NET EXPENDITURE/INCOME	249,116

The Council has made the following budgetary allocation for Health and Safety at Work in 2023/24.

EXPENDITURE HEAD	£
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	114,579
SUPPORT SERVICES	1,403
GROSS EXPENDITURE	115,982
TOTAL INCOME	1,500
NET EXPENDITURE/INCOME	114,482

Staffing Allocation

Officers carrying out the food safety and health & safety functions also carry out other duties.

Only a percentage of Officer time is spent on food safety and health & safety. Some work takes place outside of normal working hours including evenings and weekends to cover events, investigate complaints where incidents occur late night or weekend, to inspect premises with restricted opening hours, etc.

The table below shows a full-time equivalent post e.g., 37 hours a week, and typical work breakdown. Figures and time have been divided into “Food Hygiene” and “Health & Safety” as required by the FSA & HSE

Post	Post Number	Food Competency	Health & Safety Competency
Principal EHO	916305	CATEGORY A-F	CATEGORY A-C
Area EHO	916310	CATEGORY A-F	CATEGORY A-C
Area EHO	916314	CATEGORY A-F	CATEGORY A-C
Area EHO	916316	CATEGORY A-F	CATEGORY A-C
Area EHO	916318	CATEGORY A-F	CATEGORY A-C
Technical Officer	916312	N/A	CATEGORY A-C

- 2.8 FTE Professional staff allocated to Food Control
- 0.8 Professional staff allocated to Health & Safety
- 0.4 FTE equivalent staff provided for administration & support.

Staff Development Plan

The Council adopts a very positive attitude towards personal development to ensuring that staff maintain competence and are equipped with the latest information regarding legislative requirements.

Each member of staff receives an annual appraisal with their Line Manager where a review of learning and development takes place to determine personal development plans.

This considers the requirement for Continuous Personal Development (CPD) in accordance with the Food Safety Code of Practice and the HSE Competency Framework.

Officers are encouraged to attend training courses, seminars, on-line training and reading of technical papers considered appropriate and relevant to their job. It is usual for Officers who have attended courses to cascade the information learnt to the team at staff briefings.

Due to our experience and expertise with Primary Authority and our knowledge of some local novel food processes, Officers from the Commercial Team are regularly invited to speak at various events throughout the U.K.

6. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The Environmental Health Department has a food hygiene inspection monitoring procedure in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice and a health & safety inspection monitoring procedure in accordance with based on HSE Section 18 Guidance.

This involves the Principal Environmental Health Officer accompanying each individual officer on an inspection at least every quarter to assess competency and consistency of every officer in the undertaking inspections in the Commercial Team. Inspection records, letters and notices are also checked for accuracy.

Corrective action is taken as appropriate, and the details reported back to the Environmental Health & Licensing Manager.

Regular peer review takes place in the form of:

- Monthly Commercial Team meetings to allocate workloads, set targets, review performance, review training requirements, update on topical issues, exchange views and discuss problem areas
- Feedback to Commercial Team from officer attending quarterly Liaison Group meetings
- Feedback to Commercial Team from officer attending quarterly meetings of the CIEH Sussex Branch Food Discussion Group (comprises EHOs from all the Sussex authorities).
- Officer feedback from training courses attended.

Inter Authority Reviews

The Department continues to cooperate in Inter Authority Auditing to ensure consistency of approach pan Sussex for both the food and health & safety service.

Internal Audit

March 2023 the Councils Internal Audit Team undertook an internal audit of the department's food service delivery. The purpose of the audit was to provide assurance that controls are in place to meet the Councils statutory functions for the delivery of official controls on food law.

The 'Internal Audit Report' concluded that we demonstrated 'Reasonable Assurance'. This opinion means that most controls are in place and are operating as expected to manage key risks to the achievement of system or service objectives.

7. REVIEW

The Plan is approved by Elected Members to ensure transparency and accountability and is published on the Council website.

The Plan is reviewed annually.

Reviews against the Service Plan

The Head of Environmental Health & Licensing will continuously review the performance of the Service Plan. The on-going review will address resource management, performance indicators and results of any inter authority audits plus outcomes of the routine health and safety inspection monitoring.

Planned improvements to the Service Plan will be incorporated in the revised plan for the following year subject to elected member approval.

Identification of Any Variation from the Service Plan

The Head of Environmental Health & Licensing shall consider, as part of the annual review, any non-conformance identified by audit and failures to achieve performance indicators. He will monitor progress during the year. Reasons for any variance should be clearly identified where appropriate.

Areas of Improvement

This Service Plan will be subject to approval by members.

The Service Plan is a working document which will be revised annually to take account of changes, current trends, and political ethos and to satisfy the requirements of the regulatory frameworks for Food Law and Health & Safety Enforcement.

APPENDIX 1

Profile of Horsham District Council

The Horsham District has an area of 205 square miles with a population of approximately 147,487 according to mid-2021 population figures published by the ONS. The principal commercial and administrative centre is Horsham Town. The remainder of the district is 85 % rural, consisting of 23 rural market towns and villages.

Horsham town, the commercial and administrative centre of Horsham District, is located midway between London and the South Coast. The district it gives its name to, is an area that stretches between Gatwick Airport and the edge of the South Downs National Park.

The Health Profile for Horsham compiled by Public Health England states that health of people in Horsham is generally better than the England average.

Organisational Structure of Horsham District Council

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council operates a Cabinet/Leader structure. Responsibility for health and safety enforcement is delegated to Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing and Public Protection

Departmental Structure

Health & Safety at Work and Food Safety enforcement is carried out by the Commercial Team in the Environmental Health and Licensing Department.

Attached at Appendix 2 is the structure diagram of the Commercial Team within the Environmental Health and Licensing Department.

APPENDIX 2

Commercial Team Environmental Health and Licensing Department

