

Food Safety Service Plan 2021-23

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Links to other documents

Document	Link
Enforcement Policy	Enforcement policy North Northamptonshire Council (northnorthants.gov.uk)

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This plan details how North Northamptonshire Council's (the Council) Regulatory Services intends to deliver, monitor and improve its Food Safety Service from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023.

1.2 This is the inaugural Food Safety Service Plan for the Council. The drafting and publishing of this plan has been delayed due to local government reorganisation and the Covid-19 response.

1.3 Regulatory Services sits within the Place and Economy Directorate and, along with Food Safety, also delivers services in the following areas:

- Trading Standards
- Northamptonshire Travelers Unit
- Emergency Planning and Local Resilience
- Environmental Health (Health and Safety, Licensing, Environmental Protection)
- Building Control
- Local Land Charges

1.4 The following plan sets out how the Council will deliver its service in accordance with the Food Standards Agency's 'Framework Agreement' and Covid-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan. Although adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, the service is progressing well with recovery, to fully restore its services and also adapt to new ways of working.

Iain Smith
Assistant Director of Regulatory Services

2.0 Service aims and objectives

2.1 As the Council was only formed on 1st April 2021, the Corporate Plan is still in the process of being developed and will be subject to approval by the Executive. Once the Corporate plan is approved, if required, Service Plans will be revised and aligned with the Corporate aims and objectives.

2.2 Enforcement Policy

2.2.1 Food Safety Enforcement will be taken in accordance with the Council's documented Enforcement Policy [Enforcement policy | North Northamptonshire Council \(northnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/enforcement-policy)

3.0 Background

3.1 Profile of the Local Authority: North Northants by Area

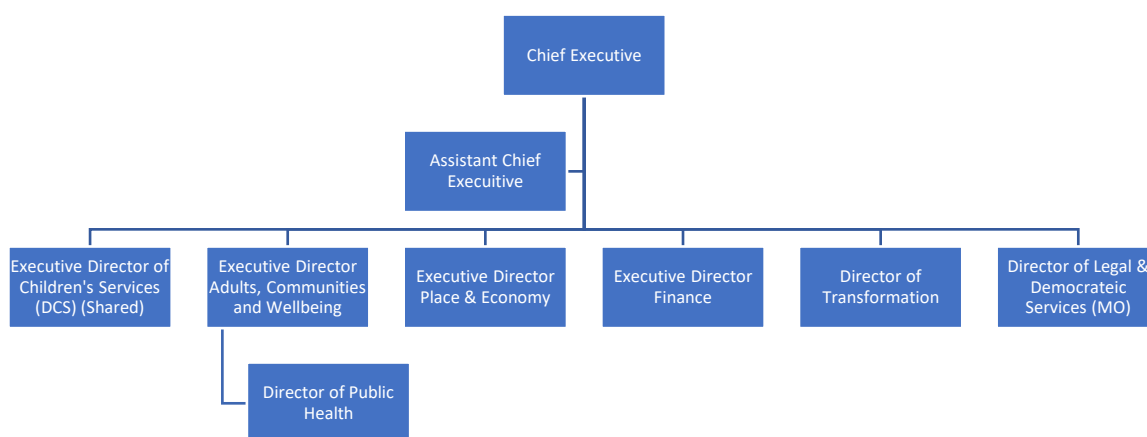


3.1.1 North Northamptonshire Council is a unitary council which came into existence on 1st April 2021 and is responsible for providing a range of public services to residents and businesses in the areas of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough.

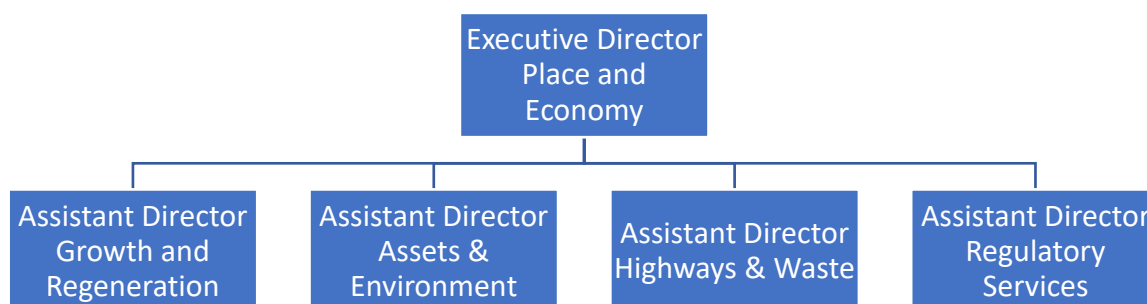
3.1.2 North Northamptonshire covers 380 square miles, is made up of 110 parishes and has approximately 150,140 households. The population is approximately 350,448. Under 10% of the population are from non-white backgrounds with the largest group being 'Asian and Asian British' and others consisting of 'Black or Black British', 'Mixed Race', 'Chinese or other ethnic group'.

3.1.3 North Northamptonshire is served by major road networks such as the A6, A14, A43, A45, A47, A509, A605, and A6116. North Northamptonshire has a rateable value of £338 million and has 74,600 working households.

3.2 Executive Leadership Team

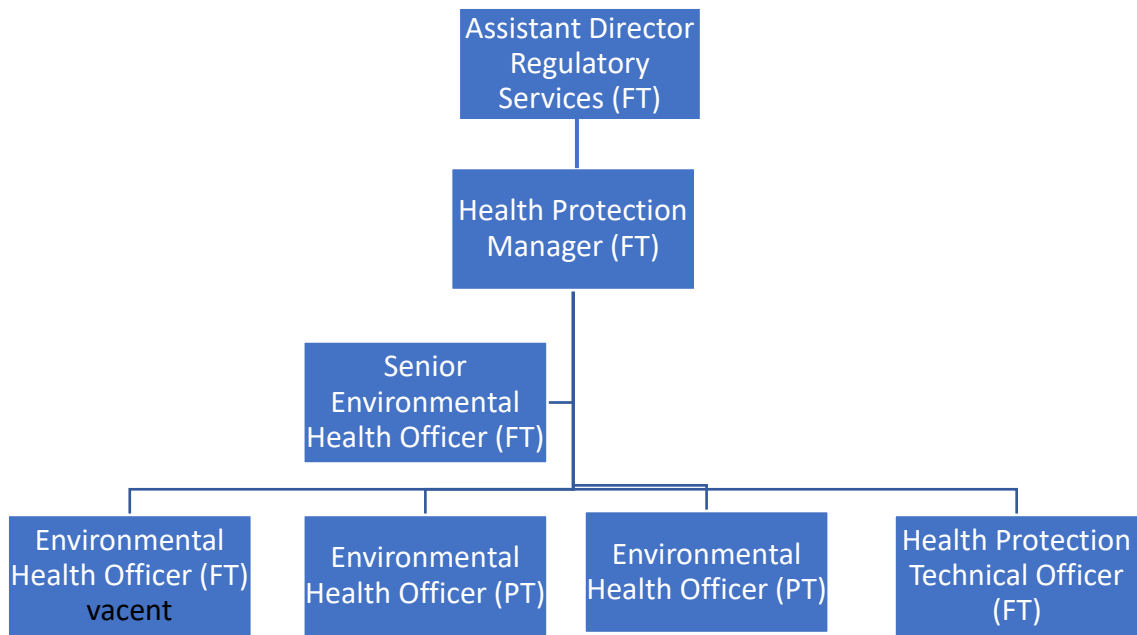


3.3 Place and Economy Services

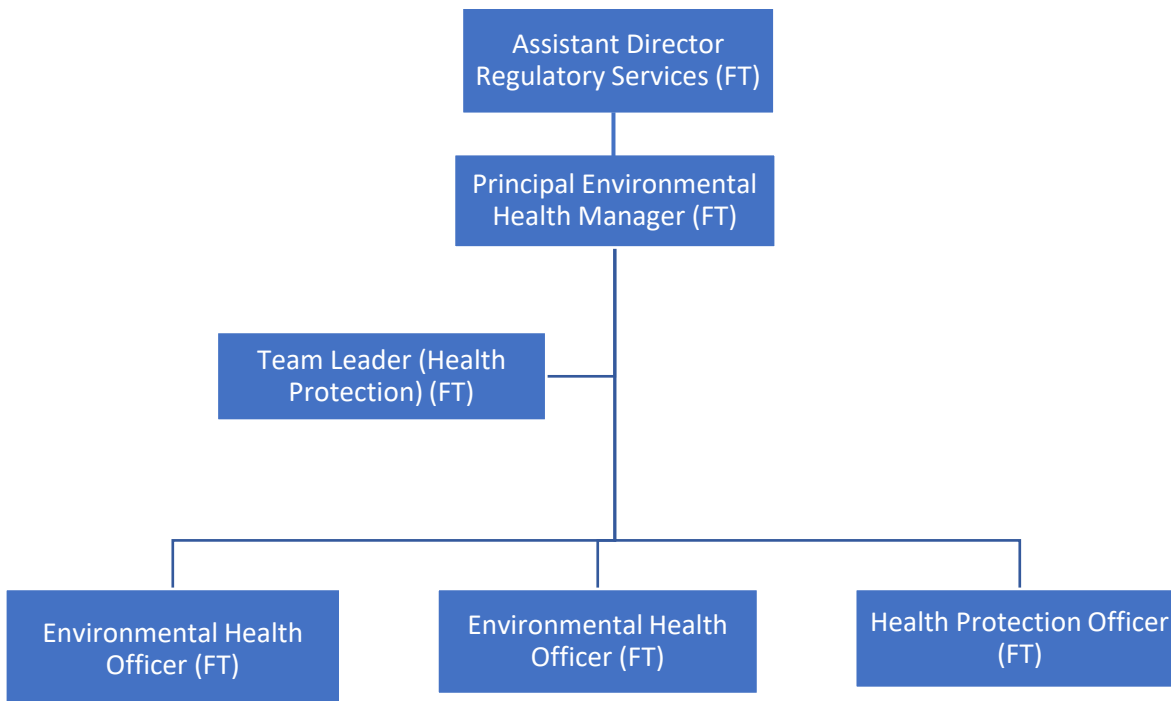


3.4 Regulatory Services Structures

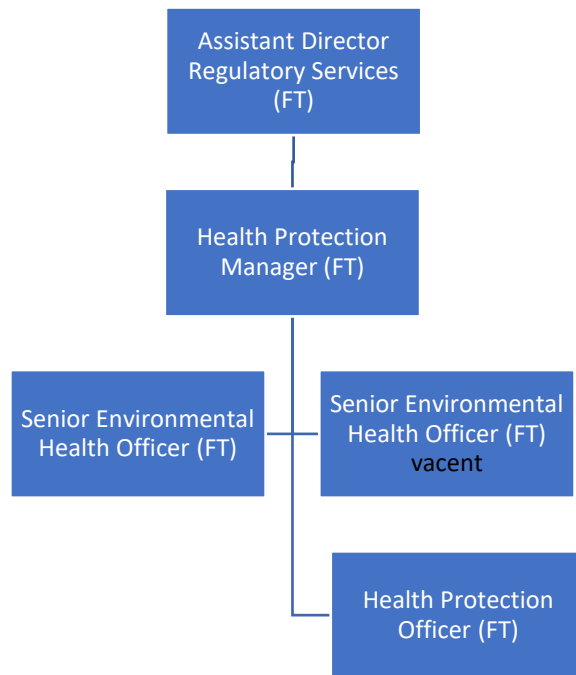
East Area



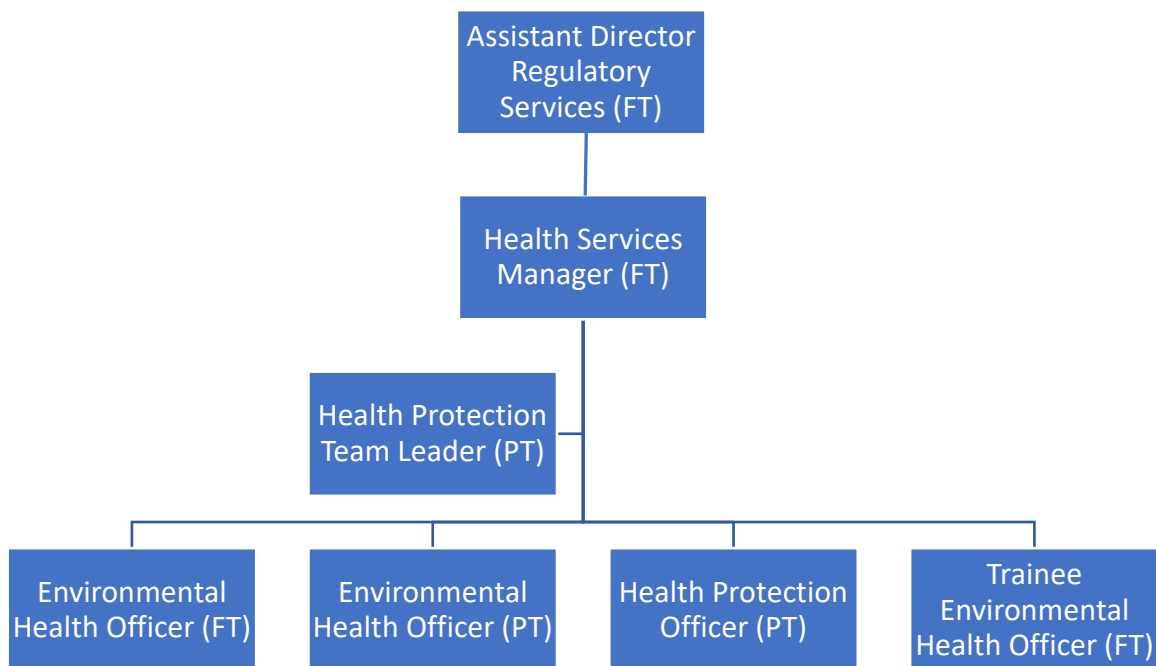
Wellingborough Area



Corby Area



Kettering Area



Please note that structures show only those officers that undertake food activities however, these officers have other functions such as health and safety, licensing and investigation of infectious diseases to differing degrees in some sovereign authorities. Food administration work is also carried out in areas by officers not shown in the above structures and in some cases the above posts are being covered by agency workers currently.

3.5 Scope of the Food Service

3.5.1 Food safety activities include:

- Registration and where relevant approval of food businesses
- Programmed inspections or interventions
- The investigation of complaints
- Investigating food poisoning and food borne infectious disease
- Responding to food alerts
- The provision of guidance and advice to businesses and members of the public
- Provision of health certificates for food to be exported
- Food and environmental sampling

4.0 Demands on the Food Safety Service

4.1 As of 1st April 2021, North Northamptonshire Council had 3044 food businesses registered for inspection, 330 of which were awaiting inspection. The risk category profile is as follows:

		Risk Category					Unrated	Total
		A	B	C	D	E		
Area	East	0	12	89	254	393	84	832
	Wellingborough	1	24	107	229	405	48	814
	Corby	1	15	81	132	169	31	429
	Kettering	0	6	109	304	383	167	969
	Total	2	57	386	919	1350	330	3044

4.2 Intervention frequency is set out in the Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice (England) as follows:

Food Hygiene Intervention Frequencies

- A at least every 6 months
- B at least every 12 months
- C at least every 18 months
- D at least every 2 years
- E Alternative enforcement strategy

4.3 Under Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 some food business establishments that handle food of animal origin are required to be approved by the competent authority. North Northamptonshire Council currently has 14 approved establishments.

North Northamptonshire list of approved food premises

Approval number	Trading Name	Postcode	Scope	Area
CX 002	Taste Original	NN17 4DU	Processing Plant (Meat)	Corby
CX 007	Orchard House Foods Ltd	NN17 4SW	Processing Plant (Dairy)	Corby
CX 008	Cambridge Weight Plan Limited	NN17 5LU	Processing Plant (Meat)	Corby
CX 009	Efamy Food Products	NN18 9AS	Processing Plant (Meat) Processing Plant (Fish)	Corby
KG 004	Meat Link UK Ltd	LE16 8HL	Cold Store Processing Plant (Meat)	Kettering
KG 005	Meat Link UK Ltd	LE16 8HL	Mince Meat Establishment Meat Preparation Establishment Processing Plant (Meat)	Kettering

WU 011	Jaeger Casings	NN8 1RA	Processing Plant (Meat) Processing Plant (Stomachs)	Wellingborough
WU 022	Barratt Foods	NN8 1RT	Processing Plant (Meat)	Wellingborough
WU 023	Station Farm	NN9 5NX	Packing Centre (Egg)	Wellingborough
WU 024	Cooked Meat Co. Ltd	NN8 4HN	Processing Plant (Meat)	Wellingborough
WU 027	Joans Fresh Eggs	NN8 2NQ	Packing Centre (Egg)	Wellingborough
WU 028	Abbey Farm	NN29 7PY	Packing Centre (Egg)	Wellingborough
WU 029	Billington Foodservice Ltd	NN8 6GS	Cold Store Mince Meat Establishment Meat Preparation Establishment Processing Plant (Gelatine) Processing Plant (Fish) Processing Plant (Meat) Processing Plant (Rendered animal fats) Processing Plant (Dairy) Processing Plant (Egg)	Wellingborough
WU 030	Billington Foodservice Ltd	NN8 6XX	Mince Meat Establishment Meat Preparation Establishment Mechanically Separated Meat Establishment Processing Plant (Gelatine) Processing Plant (Fish) Processing Plant (Rendered animal fats) Processing Plant (Dairy) Processing Plant (Egg)	Wellingborough

5.0 Food Safety Service Delivery 2021/23

5.0.1 The Food Standards Agency directs Food Safety service delivery through its Food Law Code of Practice. The Service Head is Iain Smith, Assistant Director of Regulatory Services. The lead food officers responsible for the areas in North Northamptonshire are:

- Corby: Damian Wilkins, Health Protection Manager, Damian.Wilkins@northnorthants.gov.uk
- East: Samantha Edmunds, Health Protection Manager, Samantha.Edmunds@northnorthants.gov.uk
- Kettering: Russ Howell, Health Services Manager, Russell.Howell@NorthNorthants.gov.uk
- Wellingborough: Amanda Wilcox, Interim Environmental Health Lead, Amanda.Wilcox@northnorthants.gov.uk

5.1 Food Premises Inspections

5.1.1 North Northamptonshire Council officers conduct inspections and interventions to check compliance with food law. Visits are conducted in line with the Food Premises Inspection procedure which is accordant with the Food Law Code of Practice.

5.1.2 Inspections are carried out at frequencies based on risk as detailed in the Food Law Code of Practice as set out above at 4.2. Revisits and enforcement action are carried out where necessary in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy. Food Hygiene Ratings will be displayed at [Food Hygiene Ratings](#) following inspections and window stickers issued to businesses in accordance with the scheme.

5.1.3 The Food Law Code of Practice enables Local Authorities to deal with low risk premises (Category E) by means other than inspection. North Northamptonshire Council deals with these premises by using a postal questionnaire which is assessed and followed up where necessary.

5.1.4 The Covid-19 Pandemic has had a significant adverse impact on the Council’s ability to carry out the food safety service throughout 2020-2021. Officers responsible for Food Safety functions were redeployed to the Covid-19 response. This was the case in most Councils across the country so was acknowledged by the Food Standards Agency who provided direction to focus only on high risk food safety matters whilst deferring planned interventions. The Food Standards Agency Board have recently agreed a Local Authority Recovery Roadmap which provides a framework on re-starting the regulatory delivery system in line with the Food Law Code of Practice for highest risk establishments while providing flexibility for lower risk businesses.

Inspections due for April 2021 to 31 March 2022 including backlog of inspections pre 1 April 2021

		Interventions due					
		A	B	C	D	Unrated	Total
	East	0	0	41	124	40	205
	Backlog	0	12	48	130	82	272
	Wellingborough	1	22	43	85	101	252
	Backlog	0	0	30	66	21	117
	Corby	1	2	22	72	30	127
	Backlog	0	13	47	28	36	124
	Kettering	0	4	29	180	18	231
	Backlog	0	2	74	116	149	341
	Total	2	55	334	801	477	1669

Figures are as of 25/05/2021

5.2 Food Standards Agency’s Covid-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan

5.2.1 The following illustrates the Foods Standards Agency’s expectations and timescales for the Recovery Roadmap. This is effectively a ‘re-set’ so inspections, including those that are overdue will need to be undertaken by the timescales set out in the plan. Local Authorities are encouraged to move at a faster pace where possible and must alert the Food Standards Agency if they cannot deliver in line with the plan.

5.2.2 The lead food officers for North Northamptonshire Council do not envisage any problems achieving the Food Standards Agency’s expectations and progress will be reviewed during the County Food Liaison Group meetings.



5.3 Advice to Businesses and Primary Authority

5.3.1 The Council shall provide appropriate and competent advice, through a variety of different means, to local businesses and residents, within its resource constraints.

5.3.2 Food Safety/hygiene advice shall be routinely given as part of an intervention and is complemented using mail shots, national/local campaigns and promotional activities. Advice is also provided upon request for new businesses and events.

5.3.3 In July 2009 the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act introduced Primary Authorities for some regulatory functions. The scheme allows a business to form a statutory partnership with a local authority which then provides robust and reliable assured advice and inspection plans that other regulators must consider when carrying out inspections or investigating noncompliance. The aim of the scheme is to ensure local regulation is consistent at a national level, is sufficiently flexible to address local circumstances and allows local authorities to recover their costs. Although there are currently no Primary Authority agreements in place across North Northamptonshire this will be a key future priority.

5.4 Food Sampling

5.4.1 North Northamptonshire Council takes part in both National Public Health England and regional sampling programs. Sampling is targeted at highest risk premises and/or where there are hygiene concerns and is used to improve the effectiveness of food hygiene interventions. Sampling may also be carried out to aid investigation of cases of food poisoning or to investigate complaints about food.

		Number of microbiological samples			
		2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Area	East	99	63	99	0
	Wellingborough	196	47	177	0
	Corby	200	197	176	17
	Kettering	82	29	12	0
	Total	577	336	464	17

5.5 Infectious Disease Control

5.5.1 General Practitioners report suspected cases of food poisoning to the Consultant for Communicable Disease Control (CCDC) at Public Health England. The local medical microbiological laboratories also advise the CCDC of positive results for food poisoning and food/water related illness. Notifications are sent to Environmental Health Practitioners so they can carry out investigations to determine the source of infection.

5.5.2 Documented procedures are available for the management of investigations of outbreaks of food borne disease. The procedures were developed and are regularly reviewed with the CCDC and other regional local authorities.

		Number of individual investigated cases (informal and formally notified)			
		2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Area	East	145	137	129	58
	Wellingborough	113	103	79	159
	Corby	71	59	63	27
	Kettering	63	42	52	22
	Total	392	341	323	266

5.6 Food Safety Incidents

5.6.1 The Food Standards Agency declares National food safety incidents from time to time and notifies food authorities of these by means of 'Food Alert' procedures. Some notifications require directed action, whereas others are for information only. The Council ensures all directed action is acted upon.

Number of National Food Alerts received (issued to all Local Authorities, so all four areas received the same number of Food Alerts)			
2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
158	186	164	129

5.7 Liaison with other Organisations

5.7.1 The Council is a member of the Northamptonshire Food Liaison Group. The group's aims are to:

- act as a forum to provide consistent enforcement, policy and procedures and
- share knowledge, skills and intelligence

5.7.2 Other organisational links include:

- Public Health England (East Midlands)
- Building Control
- Care Quality Commission
- Office for Standards in Education
- Police and Fire Authorities

5.8 Promotion and Education

5.8.1 Regulatory Services will contribute to National 'Food Safety Week'. Activities are based around raising public awareness of food safety and hygiene issues.

5.8.2 As a registered training centre the Council has previously offered food hygiene courses, however, these ceased at the start of the pandemic. There will be a review to determine if demand exists and if so, consider how courses will be delivered in the future.

5.9 Other key areas of work

5.9.1 The County Food Liaison group has agreed the Food Work Plan 2021-22 which can be seen at Appendix 2.

5.9.2 A key priority for the coming year is to set up an export subgroup to provide expert advice across the county for all types of export certification but particularly High-Risk Food Not of Animal Origin (HRFNAO). It is a government priority to support businesses now we are no longer part of the EU. Significant progress has been made and a procedure is currently being drafted after sampling HRFNAO at a Corby manufacturer.

5.9.3 Now that we are a Unitary Authority it has been recognised that there are significant gains to working more closely with Trading Standards. For ease, until the services are more aligned, the Food and Feed plan will sit alongside this plan with the intention to produce a single plan in the future. Work has already begun on food standards interventions being undertaken as part of food hygiene interventions and the teams are working together to ensure that we are prepared for the implementation of 'Natasha's Law' from October. The UK Food Information amendment will require food businesses to provide full ingredients lists and allergen labelling on foods pre-packaged for direct sale

6.0 General Service Issues

6.1 Resources

		2021/22 budget
Area	East	
	Staffing	£125,702
	Travel	£6,020
	Supplies & Services	£4,560
	Income	-£1,870
	Net Expenditure	£134,412
	Wellingborough	
	Staffing	£130,282
	Travel	£3,103
	Supplies & Services	£2,600
	Income	-£20,032
	Net Expenditure	£115,953
	Corby	
	Staffing	£104,768
	Travel	£2,300
	Supplies & Services	£6,210
	Income	-£26,000
	Net Expenditure	£87,278
	Kettering	
Staffing	£114,925	
Travel	£4,600	
Supplies & Services	£2,550	
Income	-£20,000	
Net Expenditure	£102,075	
Total Net Expenditure		£439,718

6.2 Staffing Allocation

6.2.1 Senior/Environmental Health Officers have responsibility for food safety, commercial occupational health and safety and health protection and improvement. This remit facilitates a broad approach to the protection of public health within the area.

6.2.2 The Food Safety Team comprises of mainly Environmental Health Practitioners complimented by Health Protection Officers. All Environmental Health Officers possess a BSc or MSc in Environmental Health and hold a Certificate of Registration from the Environmental Health Officers Registration Board.

6.2.3. The following table details the current full-time equivalent (FTE) posts delivering the services outlined in this plan. Where there are unexpected demands on the service such as responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, vacancies or complex legal cases, service provision will be prioritised to ensure high risk interventions that have the most value in protecting the public are undertaken.

Area	Food Safety Establishment
East	3.1 FTE Health Protection Manager 0.2 FTE Senior Environmental Health Officer 0.65 FTE Environmental Health Officers (3) 1.8 FTE Health Protection Technical Officer 0.45 FTE
Wellingborough	2.5 FTE Environmental Health Manager 0.15 FTE Team Leader 0.35 FTE Environmental Health Officers (2) 1.35 FTE Health Protection Officer 0.65 FTE
Corby	1.2 FTE Health Protection Manager 0.2 FTE Senior Environmental Health Officers (2) 0.7 FTE Health Protection Officer 0.3 FTE
Kettering	1.3 FTE Health Services Manager 0.2 FTE Health Protection Team Leader 0.4 FTE Environmental Health Officers (2) 0.4 FTE Health Protection Officer 0.1 FTE Trainee Environmental Health Officer 0.2 FTE
Total	8.1 FTE

Note - administration support is provided in some areas by posts not shown above.

6.3 Staff Development Plan

6.3.1 At annual appraisals discussions are held with all food officers. Actions are agreed and documented in accordance with delivery of this plan. Training and development needs are also discussed, and appropriate action taken to ensure continuous professional development.

6.3.2 Staff attending training or, in some cases carrying out their own research, will cascade training to expand the knowledge base of others.

6.4 Quality Assessments

6.4.1 Documented procedures and attendance at the County Food Liaison Group contribute to delivery of a consistent high-quality service.

6.4.2 Internal monitoring procedures are in place to ensure quality and consistency. These include monitoring of workloads and specific cases during one to one and team meetings in addition to checking progress against this service plan.

6.5 Review against service objectives

6.5.1 The Council will review its performance in respect of delivery against this plan on an annual basis.

6.5.2 Performance indicators will be reported on a monthly basis to the Assistant Director of Regulatory Services. Details of these indicators are found at Appendix 1.

Appendix 1: Food Safety Service Performance Measures

Performance Indicator	Frequency	Target
% of food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	Quarterly	95%
Cumulative No. of High Risk (A-C) inspections due / overdue (monthly, from April 21)	Monthly	
Cumulative No. of High Risk (A-C) inspections carried out (monthly, from April 21)	Monthly	
The number of food registrations received (monthly)	Monthly	