

Spelthorne Borough Council

Food Safety Service Plan

2026 – 2027

FOREWORD

This plan sets out how the Council will deliver its 2026-2027 Food Safety Service.

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

This Service Plan explains how the team will protect and promote food safety throughout the Borough by a combination of measures which include the enforcement of food safety law, sampling, advice, and education and liaising with other organisations. The mix of enforcement includes aspects that are demand driven, inspection driven, education driven, and intelligence driven. All activities and procedures take account of the Food Law Code of Practice and its supporting document the Food Law Practice Guidance (England). In addition, officers take account of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme – Brand Standard.

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

The Plan is reviewed annually.

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Summary

Local Authorities are required by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to produce service plans for their food safety services. The service plan must outline the aims and objectives for the year ahead and evaluate the achievements of the past period.

In 2025/26 the team continued to focus their resources on the highest risk food businesses and meet the requirements of the Action Plan agreed with the FSA.

The team has continued to participate in the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) with 97.7% of eligible businesses have ratings of three or above, well in excess of our target of 92%. Those businesses who are below this standard will continue to be targeted for improvement with revisits and where appropriate taking further legal action against them; 1.16% of businesses have a rating of 0 or 1 (represents 8 food businesses).

The main objectives for the Food Safety Service Plan 2026/2027 are outlined on page 4 of the plan and include a target of inspecting at least 95% of higher risk food businesses, the promotion of the FHRS with 92% of all food businesses achieving a food hygiene ratio of 3 or above, and to respond to a minimum of 95% of service requests within six days.

The team continue to deliver a risk-based service meeting the needs of our businesses, residents and visitors.

1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Aims

- 1.1.1 The aim of the food safety service is to protect health by assuring the production, preparation, storage, distribution, and supply of food by businesses within Spelthorne is safe.
- 1.1.2 We aim to provide a comprehensive food safety service to consumers and the operators of food businesses and achieve a good balance between providing advice, information, training, and where necessary enforcement.

- 1.2 **The following objectives have been identified for 2026/27** and are also incorporated in the wider service plan for the Environmental Health department:

Objective	
1.	To achieve at least 95% of higher risk food hygiene inspections/interventions in accordance with the frequencies set out in the Food Law Code of Practice.
2.	To promote the FSA national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS), including publicising on the Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts those businesses receiving a 5 rating.
3.	To achieve a 92% ratio of food businesses with a food hygiene ratio of 3 to 5 compared to those scoring 0 to 2.
4.	To actively work with our lower rated businesses to improve their standards and achieve a maximum 4% of food business with a food hygiene rating of 0 and 1. Where necessary we will take appropriate enforcement action in line with our Enforcement Policy.
5.	To respond to a minimum of 95% of food safety service requests within ten days.
6.	To ensure all authorised officers are competent as per the requirements of the revised Competency Assessment Framework as set down in the Food Law Code of Practice for all officers undertaking official food controls.
7.	To participate in national and local sampling projects as appropriate.
8.	To highlight issues with food allergens and hypersensitivity - during routine inspections, businesses will be signposted to the free material available from the FSA and we will participate in any campaigns run by the FSA, as appropriate.

1.4 Links to corporate objectives and plans

The Council's Corporate Plan 2024 – 2028 has five strategic priorities for Spelthorne. These are:

- Community
- Addressing housing need

- Resilience
- Environment
- Services

1.4.3 The Food Safety Service Plan is key in protecting our community and providing a safe environment.

An effective food safety team contributes to these priorities by protecting the health of its residents and visitors through the provision of safe food, the prevention and detection of food borne illness and food poisoning, and by ensuring that good businesses are not disadvantaged by non-compliant traders. We are working with business to help them to recover from the impact of the pandemic.

1.4.4 This Service Plan incorporates these priorities while also meeting our statutory duties.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile

2.1.1 Spelthorne is in the far north corner of Surrey. Boroughs adjacent to the borough are Runnymede and Elmbridge to the south in Surrey, Windsor and Maidenhead and Slough to the west in Berkshire, and Hillingdon, Hounslow, and Richmond upon Thames to the north and east in Greater London.

2.1.2 Spelthorne's population is approximately 103,000 based on figures from the 2021 census. The main centres of population are the towns of Staines-upon-Thames, Ashford, Sunbury-on-Thames, Shepperton and Stanwell.

2.2.3 Spelthorne is undergoing a major local government reorganisation, with the current two-tier system (county council and 11 district/borough councils) being replaced by two new unitary authorities—East Surrey and West Surrey. Spelthorne will become part of West Surrey. This will be effective 1 April 2027. Elections for these new councils are scheduled for May 2026.

2.2 Organisational Structure

2.2.1 The organisational structure of the Council comprises of the 39 elected members and a Chief Executive who is supported by two deputies. The food safety service forms part of the Environmental Health Department. The food team is headed by the Principal Environmental Health Officer (Commercial) (PEHO) who reports to the Senior Environmental Health Manager (SEHM). The SEHM reports to the Group Head for Place, Protection and Prosperity.

2.2.2 The food safety service is provided by the Commercial Team who also provide a health and safety enforcement service including smoke-free legislation; and process, monitor and enforce various licensing/registration regimes, such as all animal licensing and beauty treatments in relevant premises.

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

2.3.1 The Council provides a comprehensive service to food consumers and food businesses in Spelthorne. We have the main responsibility for enforcing the

provisions of the Food Safety Act 1990, the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 as amended by the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020 relating to retained EU regulations

2.3.2 As a designated Food Authority we are responsible for a full range of duties including:

- food hygiene inspections
- participation in the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme to enable consumers to make informed choices about the places where they eat out or shop for food
- the investigation of complaints and service requests relating to food safety matters
- responding to food safety incidents
- the provision of advice to businesses and the public on food safety matters
- sampling of foodstuffs for microbiological and where necessary chemical examination; and analysis of food handling environments through surface swabs
- controls of imported and exported foods
- the investigation of notifications and outbreaks of food poisoning and gastrointestinal infection to control and prevent further cases from source of disease, identify source and prevent spread from primary case
- provision food safety advice to managers and proprietors of food businesses
- the implementation of the Commercial Team's Health Promotion initiatives as required and where resources are available
- the maintenance the database of food premises in the Borough and ensuring that the information is accurate and up to date

2.3.3 Enforcement of food standards including labelling, calorie display and animal feedstuff legislation is the responsibility of Surrey County Council Trading Standards Department and is outside the scope of the service.

2.4 Demands on the Food Service

2.4.1 The majority of food premises in Spelthorne are predominantly small to medium sized catering or retail businesses.

2.4.2 The premises profile is outlined below. Please note that this is a snapshot in time that changes regularly as new businesses open and others close.

Type of Premises	on 12 February 2026	on 17 January 2024
Primary Producers	0	1
Manufacturers & Packers	4	6
Importers/exporters	6	7
Distributors/Transporters	16	24
Retailers	225	209
Restaurants/Caterers	562	596
Total	813	843

2.4.3 In addition there are:

- Two markets – one in Kempton Park every Thursday and one on Staines High Street on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays.
- Two approved premises (an inflight caterer and a food manufacturer).
- Routinely there are several events held within the borough during the year, including Staines-upon-Thames Day, Shepperton Big Tree Night, a number of other Christmas Markets and Shepperton Village Fair.

2.4.5 Access to the Service

The service can be accessed by: -

- Calling in person to the Spelthorne Borough Council, Knowle Green, Staines upon-Thames, TW18 1XB. The Offices are open from 9am to 5pm Mondays to Thursdays and 9am to 4.30pm on Fridays. The office is closed in the evenings and at weekends.
- Telephoning the support staff (01784 446291). The Business Support Team is available from 9 am to 5 pm on Monday to Thursday and 9 am to 4.30 pm on Friday.
- A duty officer is available from 9.30 am to 5 pm Monday to Thursday, and from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm on Fridays.
- By telephoning officers through their direct line telephone numbers.
- By emailing the Commercial Team at eh.commercial@spelthorne.gov.uk.
- Emailing officers directly via their individual email addresses.
- Food safety emergencies can be dealt with by telephoning our 24-hour out-of-hour's emergency service where the on-call officer will contact a senior officer from Environmental Health.
- Information and advice can be accessed via the Council's website at www.spelthorne.gov.uk.
- Submitting information through the Food Standards Agency website portal.
- The food hygiene ratings of eligible businesses can be found at <http://ratings.food.gov.uk/> and via a link on the Spelthorne website.

2.5 Enforcement Policy

2.5.1 Enforcement will be carried out in a fair, equitable and consistent manner in accordance with the Regulator's Code and the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy.

2.5.2 The policy was last updated in August 2023. This is due to be reviewed in 2026 / 2027.

3. SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Food Premises Interventions

It is our policy to carry out programmed food hygiene interventions in accordance with the minimum inspection frequencies defined in the Food Law Code of Practice, and priority will be given to inspections of higher risk premises and approved premises. The majority of inspections are carried out unannounced.

3.1.3 Programmed Food Premises Interventions

The profile of premises by risk rating and the anticipated number of interventions to be undertaken during 2026 - 2027 are outlined in the table below. This is a snapshot of the system as of 12 February 2026. The profile can change quickly because of an intervention meaning that a premises can move either up or down. The number of "A" rated businesses can vary significantly during the year.

Risk Category	Number of Premises inspections due 2026 / 2027	Inspection Frequency
A	0	6 months
B	13	12 months
C	79	18 months
D	152	24 months
E	45	Alternative Strategy
Total	289	

The above table does not include inspections or backlogs carried over from the previous year inspection programme or new business registrations.

3.1.4 The risk categories are derived from the scoring system laid down in the Food Law Code of Practice and are based on the type of food handled, the size of the business, the level of compliance with hygiene and structural requirements and the extent of management control.

3.1.5 In addition to this list, there will be unrated premises which are awaiting inspection (such as new businesses) and revisits to premises in line with our Food Hygiene Intervention Policy and Food Hygiene Enforcement Procedure.

3.1.6 New Business Registrations

All new registrations are reviewed by the PEHO within 14 days of receipt and prioritised with higher risk business receiving inspections within 28 days of opening.

Year	Number of new registrations
2025/2026*	150
2024/2025	154
2023/2024	128
2022/2023	137

2021/2022	94
2020/2021	109
2019/2020	121

*not whole year data, registrations received as of 12 February 2026

3.2 Food Complaints

- 3.2.1 We will investigate food complaints or complaints relating to the hygiene of food premises in accordance with centrally issued guidance and our own Food Complaints Procedure. The depth and scope of investigation required will depend on the nature of the complaint.
- 3.2.2 All food complaints involving an imminent risk to health will be responded to as quickly as possible and all others within six working days. There is a duty officer rota system within the team which allows for a quick response to urgent incidents. Where appropriate, complainants will be advised of the outcome.
- 3.2.3 The following tables outlines the number of complaints received:

Year	Complaints Received
2025/2026*	73
2024/2025	83
2023/2024	91
2022 / 2023	72
2021 / 2022	92
2020 / 2021	72

* not whole year data, complaints received as of 12 February 2026.

The subject of these complaints often includes allegations of illness, poor hygiene practices, concerns about cleaning and general repair, pest infestations and foreign body allegations.

3.3 Primary Authority Scheme

- 3.3.1 We support the Primary Authority Scheme, however do not currently have any primary authority agreements in place.
- 3.3.2 The Primary Authority scheme permits any business to register with one local authority as a source of advice on environmental health issues. Officers are required to contact the Primary Authority before taking any enforcement action against that company. The Primary Authority can then block the proposed action if it believes that it is inconsistent with advice or guidance previously given to the organisation concerned. The only exemption to this requirement is when a local authority needs to take urgent action to avoid a significant risk of serious harm to human health.
- 3.3.3 All authorised officers are registered with the online database and are familiar with the requirements of the scheme.

3.4 Advice to Business

- 3.4.1 We recognise that most food businesses seek to comply with the law and will provide such advice and assistance as may be necessary.
- 3.4.2 This includes:

- Guiding businesses to food hygiene training courses/seminars as required.
- Provision of business information sheets, including leaflets detailing local providers of food hygiene courses, practical advice on hazard analysis and controlling food safety hazards, temperature control and guides to compliance with specific food safety legislation.
- On the spot advice during routine visits and inspections.
- Advice in written inspection reports.
- Provision of free advice.
- Provision of information on the Council's webpages and social media accounts.

3.4.3 We dealt with the following requests from businesses and individuals requiring advice.

Year	Requests for help / advice
2025 / 2026	85
2024 / 2025	168
2023 / 2024	124
2022 / 2023	117
2021 / 2022	82
2020 / 2021	82

*not full year's data, requests received as of 12 February 2026.

These requests are often from new businesses setting up, businesses about to refurbish their premises or those wishing to expand upon their current activities. We continue to receive a high number of new food business registrations. Many of these businesses are based from home and gaining access to carry out the inspection can be time-consuming.

3.4.4 The team has noticed an increase on business reliance on online platforms such as Just Eat, Deliveroo and Uber Eats to reach a larger customer base. This has resulted in increased contact from these organisations checking on registration and hygiene rating status. Businesses are also demanding faster re-inspections and the publications of ratings due to the pressure from these platforms. Generally food businesses cannot trade from these platforms if they have a hygiene rating of two or less.

3.5 Food Sampling

3.5.1 Food sampling provides useful information about the microbiological constitutes an important element of the intelligence driven side of the food safety enforcement mix.

3.5.2 We will ensure that food is inspected and sampled in accordance with our sampling procedure, relevant legislation, statutory Food Safety Code of Practice and centrally issued guidance to ensure that food meets the food safety requirements.

3.5.3 Our approach to sampling is:

- We will continue to support and participate in FSA/UKHSA national sampling programmes as appropriate and where resources allow.

- Where appropriate, samples will be taken during routine inspection and if necessary, as part of legal proceedings.
- Food complaint samples will be submitted on an ad-hoc basis as appropriate.
- We will re-sample should any sample result be unsatisfactory or potentially hazardous.

3.5.4 Food samples will be submitted for analysis to the UKHSA laboratory in Porton Down, Salisbury as it currently holds UKAS accreditation for the microbiological examination of food samples.

3.5.5 Submission of Food Samples

Year	Number of Samples
2025 / 2026*	5
2024 / 2025	3
2023 / 2024	13
2022 / 2023	15
2021 / 2022	9

* not whole year data, correct as of 12 February 2026

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks & Food Related Infectious Diseases

3.6.1 We work closely with our colleagues in UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). In the event of an outbreak of food poisoning we follow the procedures set down in the Surrey Outbreak Control Plan.

3.6.2 We regularly attend the South East Health Protection Group meetings to keep informed of local and national issues, the Spelthorne representative also provides an update to the Group on our work. We also regularly attend training events run by this group.

3.6.3 Certain infectious disease must by law be reported to us. Notifications received are shown in the table below.

Year	Notifications
2025 / 2026	58
2024 / 2025	216
2023 / 2024	165
2022 / 2023	137
2021 / 2022	109
2020 / 2021	86

* not whole year data, notifications received as of 12 February 2026

3.6.4 There has been a decrease in the number of notifications received this year (2025/26) as the UKHSA no longer refer to us single cases of Campylobacter, this organism made up a great proportion of notifications with most cases associated with handling practices within the home.

3.6.5 We have a responsibility to investigate notifications to identify the source and to prevent further cases. In certain cases, we may need to require exclusion from work or nursery/schools. Our officers refer to the Single Case Plan when handling all notifications. This document has been drawn up in conjunction

with UKHSA and is maintained and updated by them. The response times required of us varies from 24 hours to three days and often these notifications will be treated as a high priority.

3.7 Food Safety Incidents

- 3.7.1 Food alerts are issued by the FSA and notify the public and food authorities to serious problems involving food that does not meet food safety standards or food that does not meet compositional standards.
- 3.7.2 The content of all food alerts received are assessed by the PEHO or an Environmental Health Officer on the Commercial team and appropriate action taken as specified in the alert.
- 3.7.3 We promptly notify the FSA and all other relevant agencies if any potentially serious incident is identified locally.

3.8 Liaison with Other Agencies

- 3.8.1 We actively participate in liaison arrangements with a number of other local authorities, agencies and professional organisations in order to facilitate consistent enforcement, to share good practice and to reduce duplicity of effort.
- 3.8.2 This includes:
 - Surrey Food Liaison Group – Spelthorne chaired this group for 2024/2025.
 - South East Health Protection Group
 - Surrey Environmental Health Managers' Group
 - Liaison arrangements with Corporate Health and Safety, Building Control, Planning, Licensing, Legal etc.
 - UK Health Security Agency
 - Surrey County Council Trading Standards
 - Surrey County Council Public Health Team
 - Immigration Enforcement
 - Marine Management Organisation

3.9 Food Safety Promotion

- 3.9.1 We participate in the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. The majority of food business are included in the scheme and it is well received by both food business and consumers. The aim of the scheme is to help consumers to make informed choices about where they purchase food from.
- 3.9.2 We adhere to the guidance contained within the FSA's document – "The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme: Guidance for local authorities on implementation and operation – the Brand Standard".
- 3.9.3 We publicise businesses with the top rating of 5 on the Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts monthly.

3.9.4 We introduced a cost recovery fee for requested re-inspections under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in April 2019. Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, we received 13 requests for a re-inspection and between 1 April 2025 and the 12 February 2026 we have received 10 requests. Revisits are made within a three-month timescale. It was noted that many food businesses have identified an urgency with these revisits as they are unable to trade on the online food platforms, and as a result we aim to do these visits as quickly as possible, circumstances depending.

3.9.5 Business have a right of appeal under the FHS. An appeal must be made within 21 days of receiving notification of their rating. The appeal is considered by the Lead Officer for food, currently this is the PEHO unless she was actively involved in the determination of the initial rating and in this instances another competent food officer will undertake the appeal, where necessary this may be an officer from another Local Authority. The rating is not published until after the appeal has been considered and this should be within 21 days of submitting the appeal.

During 2024 / 2025, four appeals were received and as of 12 February 2026 three appeals had been received. We noted an increase in businesses appealing in order to delay the publication of their ratings rather than due to a disagreement with the inspecting officer's findings.

3.9.6 Businesses also have the "right of reply". This enables businesses to explain to their customers any actions they have taken to improve hygiene standards at their premises since their inspection or to say if there were unusual circumstances at the time of the inspection that might have affected the rating. These comments are published beside their rating.

During 2024/25 and so far this year we have not received any requests for this.

4. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

4.1 Internal Monitoring

We have a monitoring programme in place. The PEHO undertakes regular monitoring visits with each authorised officer. In addition to these visits the PEHO will randomly check one report/written warning monthly. Contractors are also included in this schedule.

The PEHO also carries out one to ones with each member of the food team on a regular basis and a Continuous Performance Monitoring (CPM) meeting once per quarter.

4.1.1 In addition to these checks, all food businesses who are moved out of Categories A & B into lower risk categories must be counter-signed by an authorised officer. In the first instance these files should be passed to the Principal Environmental Health Officer, however in her absence another authorised food officer will be acceptable.

4.2 External Monitoring

- 4.2.1 The service is subject to audit from the Food Standards Agency. The last audit was carried out in October 2014. This was an in-depth three-day audit of the food service.
- 4.2.2 A statutory return is submitted to the FSA twice a year in April and in October. This is a requirement of all Local Authorities, and the returns provides the FSA with a comprehensive picture of activities taking place. The FSA will follow up any anomalies within the return or may seek further clarification.
- 4.2.3 Following concerns from the FSA after reviewing returns data about the numbers of due and overdue category D and E rated premises an Action Plan was agreed between Spelthorne and the FSA in August 2024. At that time there were 125 category D rated premises due or overdue (39 of those were due from 2023 /2024 and 86 from 2024/2025) and 198 category E premises due or overdue (154 of those were due from 2023 / 2024 and 44 from 2024 /2025).
- 4.2.4 To meet the requirements of the Action Plan, officer time was diverted from other work areas such as health and safety enforcement to focus on reducing the backlog of lower risk inspections.
- 4.2.5 In May 2025 notification was received from the FSA advising that they were satisfied that we had addressed the overdue interventions and that they would be closing the engagement. They did highlight that additional consideration should be given to the staffing levels to ensure that the authority can meet our statutory requirements for food controls.
- 4.2.6 Our implementation of the FHRS was audited in December 2015 as part of an inter-authority audit organised by the Surrey Food Liaison Group and funded by the FSA. This audit focussed on our implementation of the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.
- 4.2.7 The team participate in the FHRS consistency exercises run by the FSA. With these exercises the FSA provide a scenario for all Local Authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to work through and score under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. The score is reported back to the FSA with justification. The results are collated and circulated to all Local Authorities. The scenarios are also discussed and peer reviewed at the Surrey Food Liaison Group.
- 4.2.8 An annual return is also made to HMRC. This is a statutory return and provides HMRC with requested details from our database.

5. RESOURCES

5.1 Financial Allocation

- 5.1.1 The cost of providing the food safety service in 2025/2026, including staff, overheads and budgetary expenses is expected to be approximately £199,340 and the budget will be similar for 2026/27 and delivery of this service is included within the costings for the Environmental Health department's budget.

5.2 Staff Allocation

- 5.2.1 The 2025/2026 staffing allocation is 2.9 full time equivalents. This included administrative supports (0.65), and management support (0.15) to provide

overview of service plans, officer performance, service development and budget controls.

- 5.2.2 The allocation of staff remains at 2.9 full-time equivalent.
- 5.2.3 In addition, approximately 0.1 FTE of authorised officer time is spent on duties such as checking notices, detailed investigations, small outbreaks, and preparation for of legal cases etc.
- 5.2.4 It should be noted that this resource can be diverted to other areas of work including health and safety enforcement, public health functions and animal licensing work.
- 5.2.5 In January 2025 a fulltime Senior Environmental Health Officer (SEHO) on the Commercial team left the organisation and the post was vacant until June 2025 when a new SEHO joined (working part time – four days per week). The team was able to partially backfill this vacant position with a contractor working part-time hours, however the circumstances still resulted in a backlog of work and a reduction in the sampling programme.
- 5.2.6 In April 2024, the PEHO took up the role of part-time role of Joint Senior Environmental Health Manager. This resulted in the PEHO working 18 hours in the SEHM post and the remaining 12 hours as PEHO. A contractor working 12 hours per week has been appointed to cover the PEHO's hours, this contractor is only undertaking programmed food inspections and does not undertake any managerial tasks and is not authorised to take any enforcement action.

5.3 Assessment of staff resources required to ensure the delivery of Spelthorne's food safety service

- 5.3.1 The FSA has a statutory function to monitor the performance of local authorities and ensure that it meets the minimum standards set out in the Feed Law Code of Practice and Food Law Code of Practice. FSA performance monitoring has found that there may be inadequate resourcing by many local authorities to ensure that food and feed official controls are effectively delivered.
- 5.3.2 As a result FSA has produced a toolkit to assist Local Authorities to determine their resourcing needs. Concerns about Spelthorne's resourcing was raised in the Action Plan agreed with the FSA in August 2024. The PEHO will undertake a review of the authority resourcing need using this toolkit during 2026/2027.

5.4 Staff Development Plan

- 5.4.1 We recognise the need for all officers engaged in food safety work to be trained, not only to the minimum level required by law, but also to a level commensurate with the work they carry out. We also recognise the need to develop the personal skills needed to work effectively in the field and for EHOs' to meet the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme.
- 5.4.2 The Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement requires Local Authorities to appoint enough authorised

officers to carry out food enforcement work and that they shall have suitable qualifications, training, and experience consistent with their authorisation and duties in accordance with the relevant Food Safety Code of Practice.

- 5.4.3 The Food Safety Code of Practice requires the Local Authority to ensure that every officer receives structured on-going training, which is managed, assessed, and recorded. The minimum on-going/update training for each officer should be at least 20 hours per year, of which at least 10 hours must be food based.
- 5.4.4 Each member of staff receives one-to-one meetings as set out in the Council's Continuous Performance Management programme, at which time development needs are identified and a plan agreed to address these.
- 5.4.5 Training and development is provided by a range of methods including: -
- i. Post Entry Training - Nominations for formal training courses/qualifications are considered annually and in appropriate cases members of staff are sponsored on formal academic and practical courses.
 - ii. Short Course Training - Where appropriate, short courses, seminars and workshops can provide valuable updates for staff. We support attendance at such events through the Council's short courses training budget.
 - iii. In-house Training - We encourage in-house training as this helps to develop individual's presentation skills as well as cascade information to other members of staff.
 - iv. Cascade Training - Staff are encouraged/required to cascade information skills and knowledge they possess or have gained through attendance at Seminars and short courses to other members of staff at in-house training sessions.
 - v. Peer Review - Using peer review, during joint visits, and in monitoring work performance we encourage exchange of expertise and skills between staff.
 - vi. Surrey Food Study Group & Team Meetings - These provide useful forums for exchange of information and experience amongst team members and colleagues and assist in achieving a uniformity of approach to food safety issues.
 - vii. Consistency Exercises – these are held routinely following our monthly team meetings and involve either an exercise provided by the FSA or a recent case presented by one of the team.

6. REVIEW

6.1 Review against the Service Plan

- 6.1.1 The service has continued to provide a professional and quality service. Overall, the higher priority objectives of the Council's food service were met.
- 6.1.2 The service aims to complete 95% of its programmed high risk inspections before the end of each financial year.

6.1.3 Programmed Inspections Due & Completed

Risk Category	Inspections due 2024 /2025 including backlog	Inspections completed in 2024-2025	Inspections due 2025/26 including backlog	Inspections completed in 2025-2026* including backlog	Inspections due before 31/03/2026 as of 12 February 2026
A	0	0	1	1	1
B	17	8	12	13	3
C	106	81	76	56	20
D	185	163	156	145	47
E	207	74	229	124	24
Sub-total	515	326	474	340	95

*completed as of 12 February 2026, therefore not a full year's data

The numbers of completed inspections include new businesses that were not included in the list of programmed inspections. Also the risk rating is given as a result of the inspection, therefore the premises may be a C when the officer arrives but a B as a result of this inspection.

The number of inspections completed does not also include businesses that have ceased trading but where visits have been made to monitor these sites.

6.1.4 We have continued to successfully participate in the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

FHRS	No. of Premises	%
5	527	76.5
4	118	17
3	30	4.2
2	6	0.9
1	8	1.16
0	0	0.0

On the 12 February 2026, 97.7% of our eligible businesses have ratings of three or above. This exceeds the target set of 92%.

We will continue working to reduce the percentage of business having a rating of 0 or 1. Businesses that continue to fail to meet the required standards are subject to re-inspections, are invited to attend formal interview, and where appropriate further legal action is taken. We are meeting the target of below 4% for our one and zero rated premises.

6.1.5 Summary of Enforcement Actions

Type	Reporting Period 1 April 2024 (Oct 23 – March 2024)	Reporting Period 2 October 2024 (April 2024 – Sept 2024)	Reporting Period 3 April 2025 (Oct 24 – March 25)	Reporting Period 4 October 2025 (April 2025 – Sept 2025)
Written Warning	57	70	83	132
Food Hygiene Improvement Notice	0	2	0	2
Imported Food notices	2	0	2	8
Remedial Action notice	0	0	1	0

6.1.8 We have continued to provide a free information and assistance to local businesses to help them operate safely for purposes of food safety and hygiene. We shall continue to do so in 2026 / 2027.

6.2 Identification of any Variation

6.2.1 Due to the impacts of pressures from other areas of work within the team, there have been difficulties in meeting some of the objectives set out in the 2022-2024 Service Plan.

6.2.2 The PEHO (Commercial) is the only competent officer within the organisation to undertake animal licensing inspections as required under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018. All animal licensing work including renewals, new applications, interim revisits, complaint investigations and statutory returns sits with the PEHO (Commercial) solely. The lack of resilience in this area has had a direct impact on the PEHO's workload with time diverted from normal activities to undertake this work.

6.2.2 The team has experienced difficulties with Spelthorne's IT systems including the implementation of new laptops and the rollout of SharePoint. The team have been moving away from paper based files to an electronic only system and this has been time consuming.

6.3 Areas of Improvement

6.3.1 The following are planned for 2026-2027:

- Continue to update and implement any policies and procedures required to ensure the service complies with the FSA Framework Agreement. Our inhouse procedures require review and updating. This is time-intensive

work that we have been unable to complete due to other higher priority pressures within the team.

- Ensure that the service is inclusive and is provided to hard-to-reach groups. Our webpages require updating to help with this.
- Retain qualified and competent food officers.
- Ensure that technology is used efficiently to record information necessary
- We are also anticipating the introduction of a new licensing system for non-surgical cosmetic procedures in 2026/27. The current regulatory framework includes a registration system for certain procedures such as tattooing and cosmetic piercing and falls within the remit of the Commercial Team; and it places few restrictions on who can perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures. Under the proposed scheme, which will be operated by local authorities in England, practitioners will need to be licensed to perform specific non-surgical cosmetic procedures and the premises from which they operate will also need to be licensed. The new licencing system is likely to have a significant impact on workloads.