

# Funding for new checks on animal products creates 500 jobs

£14 million in [funding](#) has been given to local authorities across England to help them maintain the UK's high standards on imported animal products, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has today (26 January 2021) confirmed.

Over 500 new port health roles are being created to facilitate the new checks on imports of animal products from the EU from April 2021, with £8.8 million invested in Ashford Borough Council and Dover District Council.

A further £5.2 million is being spent on recruiting staff, equipment and new systems in 19 other local authorities around England, including East Suffolk District Council, Manchester City Council, North East Lincolnshire Council, Portsmouth City Council and the City of London.

Farming, Fisheries and Food Minister Victoria Prentis said:

We are rightly proud of our high standards of animal and plant goods, and we are determined to maintain them, while ensuring that operations at our ports continue to run smoothly.

This funding will allow local authorities to play their part in maintaining standards and efficiency at our borders, while also providing investment in new jobs and infrastructure.

The new checks will be introduced in a phased way, with documentary checks on animal products for human consumption starting from April 2021, followed by additional identity and physical checks at Border Control Posts from July 2021. Together with other checks on live animals, plants and plant products carried out by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), the new port checks will safeguard public, animal and plant health.

Ashford Borough Council, which is receiving the greatest share of the investment to support the upgraded Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF) built alongside Junction 10A of the M20, will carry out an estimated 124,000 checks on imports a year.

Cllr Peter Feacey, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing at Ashford Borough Council, said:

The new service is an exciting challenge for us. The scale of the task is vast, logistically complex and extremely time sensitive. We are, however, fully committed to implementing the changes that are necessary and meeting our responsibilities.

I am heartened by the support being provided by Defra, not only from a financial perspective but also practically in terms of designing and implementing this service in just a few months.

I am sure that we will rise to the challenge before us and provide this nationally strategic service.

Toby Howe, senior highways manager at Kent County Council, said:

Getting Sevington operational in time to play its part in traffic management plans for the UK's departure from the EU was a huge undertaking. But the hard work hasn't stopped there and now the focus is on transforming the facility into a fully-fledged Inland Border Facility to help trade flow without disrupting traffic.

It's fantastic to see the site plans moving forward and the job opportunities created for the local community in the process.

Just as we did in preparation for the end of the Brexit transition period, the Kent Resilience Forum, including Kent Police, KCC and Highways England, will work closely with Ashford Borough Council to deliver this challenging, but exciting, project. It puts the town at the very heart of operations for the UK's new trading arrangements with the EU.