Minutes of 19 June 2024 Board Meeting

FSA 24/09/01 - Venue Cymru, Llandudno, Wales.

Present:

Susan Jebb, Chair; Timothy Riley, Deputy Chair; Lord Blencathra; Hayley Campbell-Gibbons; Fiona Gately; Margaret Gilmore; Anthony Harbinson; Rhian Hayward; Mark Rolfe; Justin Varney (via Zoom).

Officials Attending:

Emily Miles	- Chief Executive
Andy Cole	- Director for Northern Ireland (for FSA 24/06/08)
Sam Faulkner	- Deputy Director of Strategy (for FSA 24/06/05)
Claire Forbes	- Director of Communications
Junior Johnson	- Director of Operations
Anjali Juneja	- Director of UK & International Affairs
Robin May	- Chief Scientific Adviser
Rick Mumford	- Head of Science Evidence and Research
Ruth Nolan	- Director of People and Resources
Katie Pettifer	- Director of Strategy and Regulatory Compliance (via Zoom)
Peter Quigley	- Director of Information and Science
Rebecca Sudworth	- Director of Policy
Darren Whitby	- Head of Incidents and Resilience (for FSA 24/06/06)
Jodie Wild (Zoom)	- Head of Incidents Unit (for FSA 24/06/06)

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the Board meeting and explained that due to government communications restriction for the pre-election period it had not been possible to publish the Board papers, accept questions from the public, broadcast the meeting or invite an audience for this meeting. Following the end of restrictions, the papers, along with a recording of the meeting would be published and questions accepted on the papers for written response. In light of these restrictions, the agenda had been amended to enable papers requiring more substantive decisions from the Board to be deferred until the September Board meeting.

1.2 There had been no apologies from Board Members with Justin Varney attending the meeting online.

1.3 The Chair congratulated the FSA's Director of Operations Junior Johnson who had been awarded an OBE in the King's Birthday Honours for his charity and mentoring work as well as his long career in the Civil Service.

1.4 Board Member Mark Rolfe noted a conflict of interest with some elements of FSA 24/06/04 Annual Science Update from the FSA's Chief Scientific Adviser, as Head of Kent Scientific Services at Kent County Council's in-house Public Analyst, toxicology and metrology calibration laboratory. The Chair thanked Mark for highlighting this and said he would not be invited to comment during that discussion.

2. Minutes of 20 March 2024 Board Meeting (FSA 24/06/01)

2.1 There were no comments on the minutes of the March 2024 Board meeting, and they were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Actions Arising (FSA 24/06/02)

3.1 The Chair noted all actions were complete with the exception of Action 4 from the March meeting which was expected to be completed ahead of the December 2024 Board meeting.

4. Chair's Report (Oral Report)

4.1 The Chair explained that it had previously been announced that she would be standing down as Chair of the FSA at the end of June, however, Ministers had asked her to stay on and discussions were ongoing when the General Election was called so no recruitment campaign had been initiated. She had been offered and accepted an extension to her tenure as Chair and would meet with the relevant Ministers to discuss their aspirations for the FSA. The Chair also updated the Board on the plan to conduct an internal Board Effectiveness Review to be led by FSA Deputy Chair Timothy Riley. She noted recent engagements, including meetings with Food and Agriculture Association (FAO) Officials during her visit to Rome and upcoming meetings scheduled with new Ministers in Northern Ireland and with Welsh Government Ministers.

5. Chief Executive's Report to the Board (FSA 24/06/03)

5.1 The CE gave an overview of the paper covering the impact of the General Election on the work and legislative programme of the FSA; Precautionary Allergen Labelling (PAL) and the progress on Codex discussions on thresholds; evidence to the Environment and Rural Affairs Select Committee on vets; ongoing incidents involving Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (STEC) and Listeria; and visits to Yeo Valley, Brussels, and the Balmoral Show.

5.2 The Board asked about the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM) and the issue of ensuring vehicles in Kent were directed to control points; the categorising of products to alter the level of scrutiny at control points; manifests being received at short notice in non-digital formats; staff and resourcing issues at ports; and criticism of the lack of a cross-government approach to BTOM from the National Audit Office (NAO).

5.3 It was explained that the FSA had been working very closely with the lead department for BTOM, which was Defra. Where vehicles were not stopping at control points, the consignments within those vehicles would be deemed illegal. Further information on the monitoring of these consignments would be provided to Board Members. On categorisations, it was explained that the FSA was closely aligned with HMRC codes and were restricted in how products should be categorised. On non-digital manifests, it was explained that this was an issue the FSA was aware of and was considering solutions.

Action 1 - **Further information on the monitoring of illegal consignments passing through ports unchecked to be provided to the Board.**

5.4 The CE explained that staffing had been an issue for the implementation of BTOM and that ports had ensured that resources were allocated as well as possible within the available framework.

5.5 On the NAO's criticism, the Chair noted that she was a part of a group, chaired by Baroness Neville-Rolfe, which had been working to ensure that the approach to BTOM was co-ordinated across departments and she felt this had been a constructive forum.

5.6 Anthony Harbinson noted these issues created particular challenges for Northern Ireland but acknowledged how well the FSA had done with the implementation of its part of the BTOM so far, though it was still in its induction phase.

5.7 The Chair suggested that a paper should be brought to a future Board meeting to give a progress update on BTOM.

Action 2 - **Anjali Juneja to bring a paper giving an update on the issues raised in relation to BTOM to a future Board meeting.**

5.8 The Board raised further questions around the Achieving Business Compliance Programme (ABC); Food Hypersensitivity (FHS) allergen thresholds for PAL; and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).

5.9 It was explained that the evaluation report for ABC had been very positive. The Board said that this work should be progressed and developed ahead of the September 2024 Board meeting with a fuller report being brought to that meeting.

Action 3 - **Katie Pettifer to bring a paper on ABC to the September 2024 Board meeting.**

5.10 On PAL, the Chair noted the Board's concern around a report, which had been published the previous month, that suggested the prevalence of FHS was rising. It was explained that the Board provided the advice that the FSA passed to Ministers. Proposals around the thresholds would be discussed in the autumn and this would form the basis for the advice to the Board on the issue. It was noted that numbers of consumers affected by Eliciting Dose (ED) values ED01 and ED05 varied significantly, and work was underway to understand more about this. The Board expressed reservations about the use of ED05 and noted that the FSA's Committee on Toxicity had published an assessment of the Codex report on food allergen thresholds, which concluded that there was insufficient evidence provided by CODEX to support their claim that that introducing higher allergen thresholds would not significantly impact public health. There would be an update paper for the Board at the September 2024 Board meeting.

Action 4 - **Paper on FHS and thresholds for PAL to be added to the agenda for the September 2024 Board meeting.**

5.11 On AMR it was explained that work was ongoing with Defra to ensure a one-Health approach and that the FSA's data on AMR was joined-up with veterinary information. The reduction in antibiotic use was considered to be a success.

6. Annual Science Update from the FSA's Chief Scientific Adviser (FSA 24/06/04)

6.1 The Chair invited the Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) to introduce this update. The CSA gave an overview of issues covered in the paper including the work of the Scientific Advisory

Committees (SACs), putting on record his thanks to the Committee members and highlighting recent discussion about conflicts of interest and steps to ensure they are transparently reported. He also highlighted ongoing concerns around official sampling; but noted recent cross departmental work to tackle shortages in specialist training and welcomed the recent launch of an online training programme for toxicologists; coordinated by the British Toxicological Society.

6.2 The Chair noted other issues where the CSA had made a significant public contribution to the work of the FSA including appearances at two Select Committees and throughout the Lough Neagh algal bloom incident. Anthony Harbinson added that other government departments in Northern Ireland had been pleased with the way that the CSA had taken the lead with the media engagements, particularly through the Stephen Nolan show, on the Lough Neagh issue. He also noted groundbreaking research being done in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and offered to use connections through NIFAC to make any introductions that might be beneficial.

6.3 Rhian Hayward said that the Welsh Food Advisory Committee (WFAC) supported the recommendations about laboratory capacity and advised consideration of assets like universities and food centres in Wales to provide additional capacity across the UK. WFAC had also highlighted an observation about the flow of information on infectious disease to local authorities and offered to collaborate on case studies and examples from Wales, which might help provide solutions for that data transfer.

6.4 The CSA said that university collaboration was an area of interest for the FSA, particularly in the context of providing laboratory capabilities. However, he noted that university capabilities often changed swiftly following leadership change, which was a vulnerability. Adequate infrastructure would be essential in terms of official laboratory capability particularly during incidents.

6.5 On the flow of information on infectious disease to local authorities, it was explained that sharing data was a challenge, particularly for commercial and sensitive data. PATH-SAFE had been a good example of collaboration and had had a significant impact. The report also highlighted the benefits of collaboration with academia, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and big retailers.

6.6 On the conflicts of interest issue, the Board noted that as significant areas of science research were commercially funded, finding the necessary experience to sit on the SACs could mean appointing those with links to commercial interests. The need to be alive to intrinsic biases was noted, emphasising the role of openness in mitigating this. It was also noted that the committee structure of the SACs mitigated against the interests of single individuals. The Board expressed confidence in the integrity of its scientific experts and thanked them for their work.

6.7 The Board asked to be kept apprised of developments around novel foods, particularly alternative proteins; progress with mapping future workforce skill requirements; the future of PATH-SAFE; and the relationship between the FSA's science and policy.

6.8 The CSA said he would continue to keep the Board apprised on developments with novel foods and processes, noting challenges in predicting innovations; he invited stakeholders with an awareness of emerging issues to share information with the FSA. For alternative proteins, it was hoped that there would be an announcement of funding investment in this area from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) in July. It was explained that this would be an opportunity to understand industry activity and to engage with SMEs on research and risks.

6.9 On future workforce skill requirements, the CSA noted this was an enduring challenge across the sector, highlighting cross-sector discussions around physical infrastructure; people; skills and training; and accreditation and standards.

6.10 The Chair noted while there could be challenges in implementing the recommendation to hold at least one ‘open’ meeting each year, she hoped these could be overcome. She noted the Board’s support for the recommendations and the suggestions around the SACs. It would be important to maximize input and engagement with other academics. An event around the CSA’s annual report might be a way of promoting that engagement. Workshops on current issues for PATH-SAFE, may also help encourage input from the academic community. The Board wanted to hear more about future-focused issues such as alternative proteins and the use of Artificial Intelligence through Board briefings. She noted that although science came to the Board in its own paper, it underpinned all the work of the FSA.

7. FSA Strategy: Annual Update on Progress Indicators (FSA 24/06/05)

7.1 The Chair welcomed Sam Faulkner to the meeting to introduce the paper, noting this was the first annual update against the strategic objectives in the three-year corporate plan. Sam gave an overview of the paper covering:

- the challenge of measuring the direct impact of the Strategy and so the indicators were selected to provide an overview of what is happening across the food system;
- the ambitions noted in the paper including:
    - food you can trust;
    - that food is safe and what it says it is; and
    - food that is healthier and more sustainable.

7.2 The Chair noted that how the FSA thought about its roles in relation to healthier, more sustainable foods was becoming a more natural part of its approach to its work.

7.3 Rhian Hayward said WFAC thought the case studies around sustainability in the paper could also be instructive for communications work around the topic of trust, noting the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and potential case study information arising from the work of the Future Generations Commissioner.

7.4 Anthony Harbinson said the Northern Ireland Food Advisory Committee (NIFAC) had raised questions around the prioritisation process and the focus on the first two ambitions. There was concern that if budgets became too tight, focus on healthier and more sustainability could be lost. Given our policy responsibility in Northern Ireland for nutrition, this may be of concern. It was explained that it had been necessary to prioritise statutory duties.

7.5 Further to the General Election, it was possible that the veterinary agreement mentioned in the Labour manifesto indicated that there could be changes that the government would want to make in the UK’s relationship with other parts of the world including sanitary standards, which would require resourcing.

7.6 The Chair noted the decline in trust ratings. The Board said it would be important to establish context around the decline in trust and determine whether the drop represented a discrete, temporary dip in trust or a sustained trend. The FSA had previously carried out research

into what drove trust and familiarity, consistency and perceptions of honesty were key factors, and the Communications team were working to maximise visibility where consumers interacted with the work of the FSA.

7.7 Feedback from businesses in the micro-business survey was included in the paper with recognition of the FSA standing at 97% amongst responders. Important feedback was also gained from local authorities following the Board discussion of the Achieving Business Compliance Programme in December 2023, which gave a good indication of businesses expectations of the FSA.

7.8 The Board discussed whether trust in the FSA correlated with food incidents that were reported in national media. The Board suggested that consideration should be given to how FSA activity has resulted in issues being addressed before they became a food incident could be communicated to consumers.

7.9 It was explained that Incidents were a key area where contact with vulnerable groups was essential, and it was important that the FSA was able to enhance its credibility by reaching the necessary audiences.

7.10 The Board noted that while the FSA might need to align with other government departments' plans for communications, this should not come at the expense of transparency, which could have an impact on visibility and trust. It was added that the best way to keep public trust was to ensure that the public understood that the FSA would put the safety of consumers first. The CE acknowledged this and said that it would be important for government to understand that the while the FSA had a modest budget, the food system would be less trusted without it. On the strategic indicators, the Board acknowledged the challenge for a regulator to identify high level indicators, noting the value of the FSA's external consultations. It was explained that when the indicators were set, it was agreed that they would be high level to allow the broadest possible view of the food system. The Board discussed a number of other performance metrics that could form part of our reporting around how well the business was performing.

7.11 The Chair noted that the Board considered the strategic objectives to be broadly on track, looked forward to future iterations of the report, and considered performance to hinge on meeting the FSA's responsibility to be the voice of consumers in food policy.

8. Incidents and Resilience Annual Report 2023/24 (FSA 24/06/06)

8.1 The Chair welcomed Darren Whitby to the meeting noting the importance to the FSA of incident management. Darren gave an overview of issues in the paper including the end-to-end process of incident management; areas of policy not owned by the Incidents and Resilience Unit (IRU); working with external partners; the reduction in numbers of incidents not being a true representative measure of how busy the team was; the importance of timelines in incident handling; preparations that had been made ahead of the introduction of BTOM; and ongoing work to increase the 'surge' capacity and capability across the Agency.

8.2 The Chair noted the complexities of the landscape for incident management and the improvements to the processes within the team over the previous year.

8.3 Anthony Harbinson noted that NIFAC had welcomed this paper and raised issues around the use of data for incident prevention; partnership working; and the status given to the FSA within investigations with partner organisations and the potential for attrition within the surge capacity.

8.4 The Board asked questions about grey-market goods; whether there was enough surge capacity to deal with simultaneous incidents; BTOM and access to real-time data following EU Exit; the use of lessons learned from root-cause-analysis; the Food Industry Liaison Group; and current partnership working around ongoing incidents.

8.5 On grey-market goods, it was explained that the issue showed the connections between the work of the Incidents Team and the work of the Regulatory Compliance Team. The products involved were often sweets and drinks widely sold and consumed in the United States, which did not meet UK standards. Ideally these would be found at border inspection points though they tended to be in risk categories requiring lower levels of checks. They were also often brought into the UK by post and other routes. Efforts to tackle the issue therefore tended to focus on inland sales identified by Trading Standards teams, where resource issues were acute. As many different routes as possible would be needed to tackle the problem, identifying large importers who may not be aware of the legal status of the goods. The new Food Standards Model would also help address issues such as this by incorporating insight from local authorities and the Incidents Team.

8.6 On surge capacity it was explained that the surge response was serving its purpose, but the risk and crisis management programme was considering an improved structure through the Programme Board, the body that provided sponsorship and governance to the programme, to increase resilience and meet the needs of the FSA's incident response. There were currently 40 staff available for incidents response. Other staff within the FSA, who had lent previously additional support, would also be available when needed. Over the previous year, a number of Senior Executives had also been trained to step into the Senior Executive Incident Director role to help build senior capacity. Incidents were triaged into low, medium, and high categories in terms of impacts, scale, and geographic extent. Lessons learned were captured daily. Surge capacity and capability included a large number of staff with different skills. The availability of these staff was also assessed on a daily basis. The Chair asked for further information about the lessons learned process post serious incidents, including prioritisation, to be provided to the Board through Margaret Gilmore as the Board Member with a special interest in incident management.

***Action 5* - Darren Whitby and Jodie Wild to provide Margaret Gilmore with further information about the lessons learned process post serious incidents, including prioritisation.**

8.7 There had not been any evidence that new border checks had led to a large increase in incidents, but there had been a graduated approach to BTOM implementation. Officials were working with Defra about the data the FSA needed to collect. Since EU Exit, there had been a lack of access to all the data from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) in real time. In response, the FSA had developed a system to directly access individual countries' different data sources that was working well.

8.8 On lessons learned from root cause analyses, it was explained that the team had established an industry working group with an independent Chair to consider how to improve the feedback loop with industry, adding that further cooperation on this was always welcomed.

8.9 Another group, the Food Industry Liaison Group, had been expanded to include trade associations though it was still a challenge to get engagement from some smaller businesses. The FSA was considering how to further improve relationships with some of the smaller trade bodies.

8.10 For the ongoing STEC and Listeria incidents, the FSA had been working across government departments, engaging at a senior level to understand their perspective. The STEC incident began as a public health incident, but as it was established that food had been the source of the outbreak, this had generated conversations about who would take lead responsibility. It was noted that lead responsibility for an incident was only important to the extent

that it could lead to a quick resolution.

8.11 The Chair thanked Darren and the team for all their work. The Board agreed that the FSA was now in a better place with regard to incident management and could begin the continuous improvement model from a strong position.

9. Market Authorisations (FSA 24/06/07)

9.1 The Chair noted that this issue had previously been referred at the Board as Regulated Products but that the title had been changed to more accurately capture the nature of the issues in a more accessible way for stakeholders. The previous discussion at the March Board meeting, where initial reforms had been agreed was noted. Due to the communications restrictions in the pre-election period, it had been decided that longer-term reforms to the service should be included in the paper for the September Board meeting with this paper providing a progress update. She welcomed Peter Quigley to the meeting and asked him to introduce the paper.

9.2 Peter gave an overview of themes covered in the paper including the removal of the requirements for Statutory Instruments (SIs) and renewals; post-election plans to engage with government on reforms; potential longer-term reforms; and current deficiencies in the system and the case for change.

9.3 Rhian Hayward said that WFAC had discussed many of the issues covered in the paper at their last themed meeting and said that this paper echoed many of the suggestions that WFAC had made at that time.

9.4 Anthony Harbinson said that NIFAC had considered the paper and supported its recommendations. There had been some concern raised over the potential for regulatory divergence.

9.5 The Board agreed with the assessment of the issues outlined in the paper; reiterated support for the principles outlined in Annex A; noted the need to be alert to products where a composite of processes had been used in development; and emphasised the need to focus on the FSA's future role in the system, ensuring that the FSA did not get too close to businesses.

9.6 The Chair highlighted that it was ultimately the responsibility of businesses to ensure that the food they provide was safe. The FSA's role was to provide assurance on consumers' behalf. The amount of assistance provided to businesses in making their applications was a balance between ensuring that the process could take place efficiently and ensuring that responsibility lay with the appropriate party. Third party organisations that could give that support to businesses, such as the Food Technology Centre in Llangefni, which some Board Members had visited the previous day, as well as similar institutes across the UK could have an important role. She noted the Board's support for the paper and the need to engage with the Government post-election. The cost of changing the system was also noted, acknowledging that while it may lead to a more efficient service, the initial outlay of implementing a new system should not be underestimated.

9.7 The Chair encouraged stakeholders to provide informal comments on the proposals to inform the development of the paper for the September Board meeting, noting that there would also be a formal consultation before any decisions were made about the future authorisation system.

10. Report from the Director for Northern Ireland (FSA 24/06/08)

10.1 The Chair welcomed Andy Cole to the meeting and asked him to introduce the paper. Andy gave an overview of the paper including the Windsor Framework arrangements; structures in place to manage divergence; Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) facilities and liaison with Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA); working with the UK Government; the North-South relationship on the Island of Ireland and its importance in incident handling; the reestablishment of the Northern Ireland Executive including the new Democratic Scrutiny Committee; dietary health; and the involvement of officials from Northern Ireland in teams across the FSA.

10.2 The Chair noted the complexity of the situation in Northern Ireland with regard to the Windsor Framework and noted Andy's appearance at the Democratic Scrutiny Committee, where a very clear presentation of the work of the FSA in Northern Ireland was presented.

10.3 Anthony Harbinson thanked the Chair for her input in Northern Ireland, particularly around dietary health and sustainability, noting the change in emphasis from reformulation to workstreams such as healthier vending which support a change in the food environment. He suggested that the paper undersold the work done by the team in Northern Ireland, noting the high standard of work delivered by officials there within a highly politicised environment where small issues could become serious problems if not managed effectively. He noted the recognition that the FSA received across government in Northern Ireland as a result of its ability to manage these issues. He also noted the CSA's effective involvement in media engagement around the Lough Neagh algal bloom incident.

10.4 The Board asked about the potential for work around vending machines to be rolled out more widely across the UK and the long-term prospects of effecting changes to how vending machines were stocked; and the impact of the Breakfast Directives.

10.5 It was explained that there were half a million vending machines now across the UK. The event held in March aimed to change the food offer within vending machines in Northern Ireland, reducing the amount of saturated fat, salt and sugar on offer. There were plans to evaluate the impact and to share information with colleagues across the UK.

10.6 On the impact of the Breakfast Directives, it was explained that the purpose of the Democratic Scrutiny Committee was to assess the impact on communities of EU law applied to Northern Ireland. The FSA's evidence to the Committee in respect of Breakfast Directives, provided assurance around sector engagement on the proposed changes set out in the directive.

10.7 The Chair thanked Andy for the paper and noted that the Board welcomed the engagement across the food system that had been outlined, and the potential to contribute to the Northern Ireland Executive's obesity strategy was noted.

11. Report from the Chair of the Business Committee (INFO 24/06/01)

11.1 Timothy Riley introduced this report covering discussions at the recent meeting of the FSA's Business Committee including the focus on performance; how the Committee complemented discussions from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC); discussions on regulated products and the requirements for SIs; Precision Breeding (PB) and the need for clear timetables for Tier 2 products; Operational Modernisation; and the apparent decline in figures showing public trust in the FSA.

11.2 The Chair noted that the papers discussed at the Business Committee had been appended to the Business Committee Chair's report.

11.3 Board Members suggested the need for clarity about how many times issues were discussed and at which Committees. The CE said officials often found discussions at NIFAC and WFAC to be helpful in understanding how to approach issues at the Board meeting. Timothy said he was mindful of the need to avoid duplication of discussion with ARAC and ensuring that the Business Committee considered performance rather than risk. Discussions with the ARAC Chair were held to ensure a consistency and separation of approach between those two Committees.

11.4 The Chair thanked Timothy for the paper and said the Business Committee was delivering the necessary scrutiny of performance better in its new format.

12. Report from the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) (INFO 24/06/02)

12.1 The Chair invited Anthony Harbinson to introduce this report. Anthony gave an overview of the report covering issues discussed at the recent meeting of ARAC including NAO Management letter, highlighting any concerns, as well as their audit plans for 2023/24. These papers should have been brought to the March ARAC meeting but had been delayed. ARAC also received the Head of Internal Audit's report and opinion, and Anthony noted an improvement in the service received from internal audit. The meeting had been followed by a deep-dive session on local authority resources, in terms of people and funding and considering the FSA's options and responsibilities should a local authority fail in its execution of its statutory duties due to lack of resource.

12.2 The Chair noted she had observed the ARAC meeting and noted the large amount of paperwork provided to the Committee and the attention to detail given to that by the ARAC Members.

13. Reports from the Chairs of the Food Advisory Committees (Oral Reports)

13.1 The Chair invited Rhian Hayward and Anthony Harbinson to give updates on the activities of WFAC and NIFAC since the last Board meeting. Rhian said WFAC had held a themed meeting on the food landscape in Wales at the Zero to Five food innovation centre in Cardiff. She noted the growing importance of innovation centres to the food landscape in Wales. Rhian also noted the appointment of Jayne Bryant as the new Minister for Mental Health and Early Years in Wales. Rhian and the Chair would be meeting with the Minister in due course. She noted that at the February themed meeting, WFAC Members had advocated for a slight shortening of the consultation period for market authorisations, and they had welcomed Ministerial agreement to that. Rhian also mentioned her visit to Liverpool Port with Margaret Gilmore and how she looked forward to visiting a port in Wales. It was also noted that the Royal Welsh Show would be taking place in July and a programme of engagements for the FSA Chair had been arranged.

13.2 Anthony noted three new Members had been appointed to NIFAC: Dr Michael Johnston, Dr Janice McConnell and Judith Hanvey who had previously been the FSA's Boardroom Apprentice. NIFAC had also been looking at innovation and had heard from a local sandwich company. It was noted that dietary health did not seem to be a significant consideration in creating new products. Anthony had also recently met with the Ulster Farmers' Union and accompanied the FSA Chair when she met with the DAERA Minister. A meeting had been planned with the Health Minister, who had since stepped down, but a meeting with his successor in the role, Minister Nesbitt would be arranged.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 The Chair noted plans to launch the FSA and Food Standards Scotland's (FSS's) Annual Report on Food Standards had needed to be delayed because of the timing of the General Election. Discussions with FSS Chair Heather Kelman were underway to re-arrange the launch, likely be in the Autumn, to which Board Members would be invited.

14.2 No further business was raised, and the meeting was closed. The next meeting of the FSA Board would take place on 18 September in Peterborough.