

Summary of discussions at the FSA Science Council 27 June 2019

FSA Deputy Director of Science, Professor Rick Mumford, [presented the FSA's actions and measures of success](#) in response to the recommendations made by the Science Council's Working Groups One and Two in 2018. On the actions relating to risk, the Council was invited to discuss and advise on how they could add value and assurance to the risk assessment work the FSA will lead on after EU Exit.

Professor John O'Brien, gave an update on [Working Group Three](#). Following the report to the FSA Board on [food system risks and horizon scanning](#) and their endorsement of the recommendations, the FSA will develop a strategic horizon scanning model to spot big issues in food coming over the next five to 10 years, and report back to the Science Council on progress in 12 months. The Council discussed the importance of private sector data to effective horizon scanning and encouraged the FSA to explore opportunities to access this information.

Professor Patrick Wolfe presented an update on [Working Group Four](#), that is exploring data usage and digital technology. Working Group Four discussions emphasised data standards, timeliness, data access and trust.

During phase two of their activity, Working Group Four propose to commission two pieces of work: one on the potential creation and use of 'Data Trusts' in the food sector, and another on providing a state-of-the-art summary of the latest developments and issues in the application of advanced data analytics.

The Council was also given an update on an induction event held for all members of the FSA's Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs) and presented with the [outputs of a horizon scanning workshop](#). This meeting included the 35 new experts recently recruited to join the SACs. The Council noted the benefits of having this interaction between the SACs – they can arrive at a better perspective on a problem if it can be viewed from different professional angles – and proposed that an annual event may be a suitable way for the SACs to feed into horizon scanning.

Finally, the Council were briefed on recent discussions at the FSA Board on the future FSA work plan around food hypersensitivity. The Council agreed to go away and discuss how they could best contribute to this within their remit.

[The papers discussed at the open meeting are available to read](#) on the [Science Council website](#) and minutes will be published by the end of July.