

Welsh Food Advisory Committee (WFAC) Directors' Report – 8 July 2025

Report by Anjali Juneja, Director for UK & International Affairs and Sian Bowsley Director for FSA in Wales

Summary

This report provides:

- link to the paper introduced by the Chief Executive at the last Board meeting, held on 18 June 2025
- summary of senior engagement across the UK and International Affairs (UKIA) Directorate
- overview of developments and matters of interest to WFAC relating to Wales.

Members of the committee are invited to:

- note the update
- invite the Directors to expand on any issues for further discussion

Chief Executive's Report to the Board

This is the latest [Chief Executive's Report](#) presented to the June Board meeting.

Overview from the Director of UK and International Affairs (UKIA)

This section provides an overview of some of the key work undertaken by the Director of UKIA, Anjali Juneja, that will be of interest to WFAC since the last report in April.

Budgets and Business Planning

[Our Food](#), the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland's Annual Report on Food Standards was published in June, and we are hosting an associated event in Cardiff on 9 July. Attendees at the event will range from industry, academia, other government departments and local government.

The 2025/26 budget is now in place for the FSA in Wales, although we are still awaiting confirmation from the Wales Government how the National Insurance contribution will be covered.

The UK Government Spending Review included a block grant allocation to the Welsh Executive who will need to prioritise and allocate the resources across all departments, including the FSA in Wales. This will happen over the next few months. The Wales block settlement increased by £5bn over next 3 years (£1bn in 2026-27; £1.6bn in 2027-28 and £2.4 bn in 2028-29. They also

received an additional £4m in this financial year.

Future of Regulation

Following on from the update on National Level Regulation I provided at the April meeting we have continued to engage with stakeholders in Wales on the next steps for National Level Regulation as well as placing this workstream as a building block as part of a discussion on the future of Food Regulation. The FSA held a Future of Food Regulation event on 20 May, with Welsh stakeholders in attendance, the findings of which was presented at the June Board. The Board agreed the immediate next steps on the use of retailer data, which had been developed with regulatory stakeholders, and guided that our priority should be implementing those in a way that led to tangible improvements in regulatory delivery. The board also noted the great work done on extensive stakeholder engagement, both on these next steps and on wider reforms to the regulatory system. They agreed that we continue our ambition to develop a vision for wider reform, but that might not happen as quickly as we would like, given the demands of other priorities such as the SPS agreement. They asked for an update on NLR at the December Board meeting, with a focus on how the immediate next steps were being implemented.

The team will now work with stakeholders to work through what the outcomes from the board mean for Wales.

Engagement with Local Authorities

I have met with representatives from Directors of Public Protection Wales (DPPW) to discuss their work to support recruitment into the environmental health and trading standards professions. This includes a new level 4 apprentice programme in Wales which has been established. This was an extremely helpful meeting and the team will continue to engage with DPPW to provide support where needed.

Engaging with Welsh Government

At Ministerial level, in late May the FSA Chair, WFAC Chair and I met with Minister Murphy, Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing. The Chair and I also participated in the Four Nations Ministerial Meeting in May where the discussion centered around borders and, with the UK/EU Leaders' Summit taking place on 19 May, the UK ambition for an SPS Agreement. Minister Murphy, alongside the FSA Chair, will be launching the FSA's Annual Report on Food Standards in Cardiff in July.

In my previous report I mentioned meeting with the Welsh Government Directors for Rural Affairs and Environmental Sustainability, and the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales, and the importance of this engagement. We have now established these as a regular recurrence and met most recently in May.

Along with several FSA in Wales colleagues across our policy and delivery functions, the Chair, CEO and I were recently interviewed by researchers from Cardiff Metropolitan University as part of the ongoing review of the FSA in Wales commissioned by the Welsh Government. Further detail of the review is included later in this report.

Westminster activity

Since July 2024, the UK Government has reset and strengthened our relations with European partners by working with the EU to identify areas where we can strengthen co-operation for mutual benefit across a range of areas, including a sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) agreement. The UK Government is seeking to cut costs and bureaucracy to the fullest extent possible for agri

goods moving between both Great Britain (GB) and the EU and GB and Northern Ireland. The FSA is working across Government to carefully consider and understand the public health implications of an SPS agreement with the EU.

In other international developments, the recent India-UK Free Trade Agreement will in time lead to DBT commissioning us to provide a Section 42 Report contribution.

Update from the Director for FSA in Wales

Since the last WFAC meeting in April, the team have agreed our 2025-26 priorities and business plan, as well as progressing priority work areas as detailed below.

Food and Drink Wales Awards – on 22 May, I, alongside the WFAC Chair, Board members and FSA in Wales staff attended the awards at Venue Cymru, Llandudno where the FSA in Wales sponsored and presented the Local Community Champion Award. It was a great opportunity to raise awareness of the FSA's work and connect with key industry figures, Ministers, Welsh Government officials and stakeholders.

Computers for Charity – I was also able to take advantage of my journey to Llandudno for the Food and Drink Awards to donate essential repurposed FSA technology to the T? Hapus Foodbank and Community Resource Centre as part of a cross-FSA initiative to mark with the FSA's 25th anniversary. The donation, which included laptops and smartphones, will help the charity continue their vital work in supporting the communities of Tudno and Mostyn and to raise awareness of opportunities available locally by creating a vibrant, sustainable center. We will be donating IT equipment to a further seven charities across Wales over the coming months as part of the FSA's Computers 4 Charity programme.

FSA Review – the review is progressing, and both FSA and external stakeholders have been interviewed by the Cardiff Met team in recent weeks. A draft report is due to be shared with the review's Oversight Panel, of which I am a member, in July. The final report and recommendations are due in August.

Annual Report of Food Standards – our latest report was published and laid bilingually in the Senedd on 19 June, the culmination of weeks of input from the team. We will be officially launching the report at our parliamentary event in the Pierhead on 9 July, welcoming both the FSA Chair and the Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing who will be addressing the launch.

UK Government Food Strategy – we've recently joined a Welsh Government subgroup designed to contribute to the UK Government Food Strategy. The subgroup aims to ensure a coordinated approach within Welsh Government while allowing us to offer FSA input and gain deeper insights into Welsh Government perspectives. We are collaborating closely with colleagues in the FSA Strategy Unit to input.

Future Generations Commissioner Report – on 29 April the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales released his [Future Generations Report 2025](#), marking a significant milestone in the pursuit of a sustainable Wales. This report evaluates a decade of progress made under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and outlines recommended goals for public bodies to drive national well-being in the next five years. The Commissioner highlighted notable achievements, such as free school meals for primary pupils and Wales' ranking as the second-best country globally for recycling. Insight on ongoing challenges can be found, covering climate and nature emergency and high poverty levels. Key recommendations in relation to food include healthy local food in schools, and a national food resilience plan. The findings and recommendations were discussed at the Future Generations Action Summit taking place at the National Museum in Cardiff on the same day, attended by John Williams, a member of our Welsh Food Advisory Committee.

WG Community Food Strategy – in response to the Future Generations Report, Welsh Government launched its [Community Food Strategy](#) aimed at strengthening local food systems, promoting healthy eating, and fostering sustainable communities. This initiative which is part of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government, seeks to:

- connect Welsh producers with consumers
- support community-led food projects
- and ensure access to healthier food for all

The strategy will see over £2 million invested in 2025-26, with funding secured until March 2028. Since 2022, local food partnerships have expanded across all Welsh local authorities. This has driven the coordination of a range of expertise and efforts to tackle food poverty, improve public health, and support green growth. Further aims will focus on increasing public sector spending on Welsh food by 50% by 2030, creating new market opportunities for local producers. The strategy integrates with the Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales plan and the 2024 Child Poverty Strategy, supporting small-scale horticulture and community growing initiatives. A new Ministerial Advisory Group will oversee its implementation, grounded in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Cymru Can strategy and the FSA's team in Wales will work closely with Welsh Government colleagues to progress this work.

Local Authority visits – in May, I accompanied Local Authority colleagues from Torfaen and Swansea on Environmental Health and Trading Standards inspections. I got to see how the Safer Food Better Business packs and allergen and labelling guides are put into use and witnessed the challenges faced by officials on the ground; and for small businesses who are trying to get to grips with the requirements to set up in the food sector. It was a great insight into the work of Local Authority colleagues, and I'd like to express my thanks to colleagues in Torfaen and Swansea for these opportunities.

NFU Cymru's Celebration of Welsh Food and Farming event - I attended this event at the Senedd on 10 June, where NFU Cymru launched their new election manifesto; Welsh farming: Growing forward. Food production is at the core of the manifesto, with key asks concerning a comprehensive farm to fork food strategy, future policy underpinning food production and commitments to increasing the sourcing of Welsh food in the public sector.

Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) conference – along with colleagues, I attended the WLGA conference and dinner. The event was a great opportunity to showcase the work of the FSA and learn about challenges for Local Government.

Over the last few months, FSA in Wales policy teams have:

Worked with FSA cell cultivated products (CCP) sandbox colleagues to help prepare for the CCP workshops on labelling that will take place in June and December 2025.

Worked with Market Authorisation of Regulated Products Service team and individual policy teams to prepare recommendations to ministers across GB seeking agreement to authorise applications in tranche 4 batch 1. This is the first tranche of applications following the phase I reform SI coming into force, and therefore the first authorisations made without a statutory instrument. Separately, we are also working on tranche 4 batch 2 risk management recommendations for consultation and risk management recommendation for consultation related to the three front runner CBD applications. Consultations should be launched in the coming months.

Worked with colleagues in the Food Contact Material and comms teams to issue a risk management statement advising businesses not to use ocean-bound plastic (OBP) in food packaging. This follows the Joint Expert Group for Food Contact Materials (FCMJEG) publishing

their assessment on the use of OBP in food contact materials including food packaging for meat, poultry and fish sold in supermarkets. The FSA and FSS reviewed the FCMJEG assessment and concluded there was not enough evidence to confirm the safety of this type of plastic used in food packaging and that it does not impact health.

Since the April meeting, the teams working with local authorities (LAs) have:

Attended the annual CTSI conference and the FSA in Wales sponsored the Steve Whitehouse Award, given to an individual, from a Welsh Authority, who achieved the highest overall mark across all three exams that form the Food Standards Module of the Trading Standards Practitioner Diploma. This year's winner was Emily Thrasher from the Isle of Anglesey.

The team attended the Welsh Local Government Association conference on 18 and 19 June at Venue Cymru, Llandudno. We had a corporate information stand at the event, sharing information on our work and answering queries from stakeholders.

Worked in conjunction with colleagues from the Regulatory Compliance Division and Northern Ireland to organise in-person local authority engagement events. The event for local authorities in Wales is to be held on 2 July in Llandrindod Wells, Powys. Sessions will cover Enhanced Registration, Local Authority Resourcing, the Local Authority Data Project, Cost Recovery and Key Performance Indicators. A Q&A session will also be held with FSA staff.

The Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) consultation closed on 19 May. We received 14 responses from Welsh Local Authorities, Environmental Health Wales, Trading Standards Wales, Professional Bodies and Industry. Work is underway to review the responses ahead of publishing the summary of responses within 3 months.

The incidents and National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) have also been busy over recent months:

Smokies: Dyfed-Powys Police arrested a further suspect in relation to the supply of unfit meat (smokies). He was interviewed by NFCU officers and subsequently released under investigation.

NFCU hosts Food Fraud Training in Bangor in partnership with the Food Technology Centre, delivering a hands-on food fraud prevention session to 10 Welsh businesses and 2 local authorities. Using a simulated food crime scenario, the training promoted collaborative learning and strengthened participants' ability to identify and prevent food crime.

In May, members of the Consumer Protection and Local Authority Partnership Team visited a food production site in Wales. This visit provided valuable insight into the behind-the-scenes processes involved in initiating a product withdrawal or recall.

The team has been actively engaged in managing ongoing foodborne disease outbreaks and clusters of concern. These have included Welsh-linked cases of Hepatitis A and STEC E. coli. The team continues to support food chain analysis and contribute to broader FSA investigations as part of a coordinated four-nation approach.

We have responded to queries from Local Authorities following the publication of a [Food Alert for Action regarding Jolly Rancher products](#) manufactured by The Hershey Company. These efforts are helping to raise public awareness and support the removal of grey market imported goods from sale.

Worked with colleagues across the FSA to address incidents involving imported Dubai-style chocolate and supported the [release of consumer guidance](#). This includes the FSA's advisory notice warning individuals with allergies about certain imported chocolate products.

The team has played a key role in the implementation of the new Incident Recording system, PRISM. We will continue to embed this new system and manage the transition from the legacy system that it replaces. The priority is to improve how we

Our bilingual communications team in Wales have continued to ensure key FSA messages have been communicated across Wales, which has included:

The team have again been widely involved in this year's Annual Report on Food Standards in terms of translation, uploading content, laying the report, planning the launch event for July and sharing the report with key stakeholders in Wales.

We recently featured on BBC Radio Cymru's 'Bore Cothi' programme to share tips on safe food preparation for barbecues and outdoor eating. The show regularly invites the team to discuss food safety, offering a valuable, cost-free way to reach a key audience.

We recently met with the Welsh Joint Education Committee following an invitation to collaborate on developing a Food Planning and Preparation module within a series of new National Qualifications for Wales. This will be included in a Skills Suite that learners aged 14-16 will be studying from September 2027 onwards emphasizing the importance of practical skills. We will be providing input on preparing food safely, allergens, food labelling and food waste.

The team have also been implementing the FSA's Safer food means better business campaign in Wales over the past few weeks. This centrally coordinated campaign will be 'always on' throughout the year, running in phases with the aim of supporting food businesses with easy-to-access and free to use resources to help them stay on top of good food hygiene and safety practices. The team have been using existing and new partner relationships to communicate to our target audience, including local authorities, Mentora and Business Wales.

Consultations

There are currently no live consultations.

Forward look

Much of the work we have updated on in this report will continue over the coming months, including supporting the Welsh Government review of the FSA in Wales and implementing any recommendations. In addition, we will also be working to progress the following projects and workstreams.

In relation to Local Authority Delivery, we will publish a summary of responses to the proposals of the recent Code consultation and provide advice to the Minister on publishing a revised Code. We will continue to work with local authorities as we collaboratively explore the virtues of an enhanced registration system, the potential for cost recovery and identify the next steps of the national level regulation workstream.

In terms of our communication and stakeholder activity for the next few months:

- We are currently planning a programme of engagement for the Chair for this year's Royal Welsh Show and Sian will also be attending as the Director of the FSA in Wales. The event is an excellent opportunity to catch-up with some of our key industry and government stakeholders in one place.
- We will be attending the National Eisteddfod again this year, which is being held in Wrexham this August. As with previous events, we will attend with our corporate information stand, sharing key FSA messages including the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, food crime and general consumer food safety messaging.

- We will continue to coordinate our IT donations to charities in Wales over the coming months, taking advantage of presence at events such as the National Eisteddfod to distribute these across Wales.
- We will also be running a long-term consumer food hygiene campaign launching in September. Whilst this campaign had a 'soft launch' on 7 June to mark World Food Safety Day, this will be rolled out as a continuous campaign to educate consumers on poor hygiene practices in the kitchen that can lead to foodborne illnesses. This campaign will be delivered with some of our key partners, including local authorities, on our social media platforms and via the media in Wales.

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