

Summary of discussions at FSA Board meeting 6 December 2017

The Board reviewed the progress of the **National Food Crime Unit** over the last 12 months. Its achievements have been significant. The Board particularly welcomed the reduction in deaths attributed to the highly toxic so-called 'fat-burning' substance DNP, and the Unit's growing international leadership role.

The Board agreed that intelligence shared by industry was essential to deliver the potential of the Unit, and agreed to a set of protocols on the handling and use of such information from the Food Industry Intelligence Network (FINN).

The Board reiterated their ambition to develop the investigative capability of the Unit, as recommended in the Elliot and Kenworthy reviews, but that this could not proceed without the necessary new funding being made available by Government. Chairman Heather Hancock reported that the Minister for Agriculture, George Eustice, had held a meeting of the Ministerial Group on Food Crime to consider whether to support this expansion of remit and scope, and the result of their considerations should be available in January. If support was forthcoming, the next stage would be to develop a detailed business case for agreement with the Treasury and other departments.

In response to the latest update on the [Regulating Our Future \(ROF\)](#) programme, the Board confirmed their support for strengthening the contribution of regulated private assurance schemes in providing assurance of compliance, including the opportunity to improve their scope and to find more ways to test management and culture in relation to food safety, hygiene and standards. The Board decided that further development of the Certified Regulatory Auditor concept, was a lower priority at this stage in the programme. It should be revisited once there was more evidence about where specialist skills gaps might remain in the new system, and whether the CRA approach could effectively deliver in those particular circumstances.

The Board also considered the progress that had been made in evidence generation, bridging the animal production and public health sectors and international engagement in **antimicrobial resistance (AMR)**. They welcomed the ongoing national and international engagement work to collaboratively address the issue of AMR and endorsed the future planned activity.

The Board discussed the progress in reshaping the future surveillance approach, and agreed that a review of the official controls laboratory provision was now a priority, impacting regulatory reform, our plans for exiting the EU, and our direction on surveillance.

The Board was given an update on the work of our social science team and the establishment of an Advisory Committee for Social Science. The Board emphasised that social science and evidence, including about consumer and business behaviour throughout the food chain, should be reflected in every dimension of the department's work.

The papers discussed are available and a video on demand recording of the meeting will be available on Friday 8 December.

Next meeting

The next meeting of our Board will be on 14 March 2018 in London.

You can [register to attend in person or online](#). As places may be limited, please wait until you receive an official confirmation of your registration before making arrangements to attend. If you need help registering, or have any queries, please contact tel: 020 8481 3302.