

**Food Standards Agency
Board Meeting – 10 December 2025**

FSA 25-12-01

Minutes of the FSA Board Meeting on 17 September 2025

17 September 2025, Titanic Hotel, The Titanic Quarter, 8 Queens Rd, Belfast BT3 9DT

Present: Susan Jebb (Chair); Frank Atherton; Clare Evans; Fiona Gately; Margaret Gilmore; Anthony Harbinson; Rhian Hayward; Louise Hoste; Timothy Riley; Mark Rolfe; Steve Ruddy.

Apologies: Susan Paterson

Officials Attending:

Katie Pettifer	- Chief Executive
Nathan Barnhouse	- Head of Regulatory Compliance Division (For FSA 25/09/04)
Sian Bowsley	- Director of Wales (For FSA 25/09/08)
Beth Chaudhary	- Director of Strategy and Regulatory Compliance
Ed Clift	- Deputy Director of Finance, Planning and Commercial
Rachel Cooper	- Director of Strategy and Regulatory Compliance
Jenny Desira	- Head of Knowledge Information Management and Security (For FSA 25/09/07)
Claire Forbes	- Director of Communications
Anjali Juneja	- Director of UK & International Affairs
Kevin Maher	- Head of Animal Welfare and Delivery Assurance (For FSA 25/09/06)
Robin May	- Chief Scientific Adviser
Karen McCloskey	- Head of Delivery Standards Unit (For FSA 25/09/04)
Rick Mumford	- Head of Science Evidence and Research (For FSA 25/09/05)
Julie Pierce	- Director of Information and Science
James Robinson	- General Counsel
Rebecca Sudworth	- Director of Policy
Noel Sykes	- Head of Standards and People Policy (For FSA 25/09/07)
Richard Wynn-Davies	- Head of Operational Assurance and Excellence (For Junior Johnson)

Apologies: Junior Johnson

1 Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed newly appointed Board Members Louise Hoste, Clare Evans, Steve Ruddy and Frank Atherton and noted apologies from new Board Member Susan Paterson who was unable to attend due to a prior commitment. Apologies had also been received from Director of Operations Junior Johnson. Richard Wynn-Davies would deputise for Junior for this meeting.
- 1.2 This was the final Board meeting for Board Members Mark Rolfe and Margaret Gilmore, and the Chair paid tribute to their contribution to the FSA throughout their time on the Board. It was also noted that this would also be the final Board meeting during Robin May's appointment as Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA).

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- 1.3 The Chair paid tribute to contribution the CSA had made to the FSA noting communications activities he had undertaken since June about algal blooms in Lough Neagh as well as on glycerol in slush ice drinks and noted his work supporting the development of the regulatory framework for precision-bred organisms and the establishment of the FSA innovation hub.
- 1.4 Margaret noted the pride she took from her time on the Board, particularly in the advice the FSA had given to ministers about Owen's law for including allergen information on menus at restaurants. She asked for assurance that the FSA would continue to push for that to be mandated. The Chair confirmed that she had written to new ministers, including the work of the FSA in this area. Five questions had been received from members of the public ahead of the meeting relating to items on the agenda. These had been published on the FSA's website and would receive a written response in due course.
- 1.5 Board Members declared no new interests, not already published and raised no conflicts of interest with items on the agenda for this meeting.

2 Minutes of 18 June 2025 Board Meeting (FSA 25/09/01)

- 2.1 No comments were raised on the minutes of 18 June 2025 Board Meeting, and they were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 Actions Arising (FSA 25/06/02)

- 3.1 No comments were made on the action log. The Chair noted that all but two of the actions included in the log were now complete. The ongoing actions were due for completion before the end of the year.

4 Chair's Report (Oral Report)

- 4.1 The Chair updated the Board on events since the previous Board meeting including the appointment of Dame Angela Eagle as Minister of State for Food Security and Rural Affairs replacing Daniel Zeichner; the publication of The Good Food Cycle, the outline document for the Government's Food Strategy; the publication of the Government's 10 Year Health Plan; progress on the FSA's commitments to the regulation action plan.
- 4.2 She updated the Board on engagements she had undertaken over the period including the launch events in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for the Annual Report on Food Standards.

5 Chief Executive's Report to the Board (FSA 25/09/03)

- 5.1 The Chief Executive (CE) highlighted some key areas of her report including the monitoring of foodborne disease levels and the breaching of thresholds for Campylobacter and Salmonella initiating formal investigations detailed in the annex to her report. An incident involving botulism affecting 700 cattle had just

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been de-escalated and was now being treated as routine. This strain of botulism did not affect humans, and all affected animals had been kept out of the food chain. The response had been aided by improvements in the case management system.

- 5.2 The CE also highlighted the call for evidence on the India trade deal which would close on 26 September.
- 5.3 The Board expressed concern over the slow pace of response on the food-borne disease threshold breaches. The CSA highlighted possible factors explaining the increase including improved detection, travel, domestic cooking practices, climate change, and food imports. The epidemiology of food-borne disease group had met to discuss research needs and further information about the activities of this group would be provided to the Board.

Action 1 - Rebecca Sudworth to provide Board Members with further information on the activities of the food-borne disease epidemiology group.

- 5.4 The Science Council was also reviewing why food-borne disease levels had remained elevated over the past two decades despite ongoing improvements in the system.
- 5.5 Two Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Committee reports were discussed. One on illegal imports and one on commercial imports and the implementation of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM). The previous Board paper on BTOM was cited in the EFRA report, and the concerns raised in the paper about IT systems and data sharing were echoed by the Committee. The EFRA committee recommended a cross-agency Task Force led by Defra. The suggestion to include Local Authorities was welcomed.
- 5.6 The Board raised the issue of the withdrawal of US funding for the World Health Organisation and the impact on their food safety incident network (INFOSAN). It was explained that funding had been secured until the end of 2027.
- 5.7 The Board welcomed the broadening of communication channels around the measures discussed at the previous Board meeting on glycerol in slush ice drinks. Officials reported that some parts of the industry considered a lower age limit would be more appropriate but had not yet provided sufficient evidence that this would be safe. The Board reiterated the call to industry to provide data on glycerol in their products noting knowledge gaps in relation to whether the product was safe at all. It was noted that another incident of glycerol intoxication in a six-year-old had been reported, reinforcing concerns.
- 5.8 The Board noted the launch of the consultation on CBD products and asked for assurance that the ALARA (As Low As Reasonably Achievable) principles would be followed for THC contamination to avoid competitive advantage through varied contamination detection levels. Officials reported that the ALARA principles would be applied consistently. The Chair asked for a paper at the December Board meeting summarising the consultation responses. This would give the Board a chance to comment ahead of the risk management arrangements for CBD products being finalised. It noted Food Standards

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Scotland had not yet issued their consultation and discussions were ongoing to try to coordinate future timelines.

Action 2 - Policy team to bring a paper to the December 2025 Board meeting summarising the CBD consultation responses.

- 5.9 Concerns were raised about food hypersensitivity around mislabelled Dubai-style chocolate. Claire Forbes explained that the FSA had issued a warning to consumers about imported Dubai-style chocolate, which may not have had correct allergy labelling and this had had a significant response making it a high-profile campaign. Allergen messaging was also being reinforced through the FSA business guidance.

6 Annual Local Authority Performance (FSA 25/09/04)

- 6.1 The Chair welcomed Karen McCloskey and Nathan Barnhouse to the meeting to deliver the annual update on Local Authority Performance, noting that the detail was considered regularly at the Business Committee, but the annual report allowed the whole Board to take a more strategic overview of the system. Nathan Barnhouse introduced the report, highlighting progress in risk-based interventions, proposed changes to the hygiene model and ongoing workforce challenges. It was explained that proposed changes to the hygiene model were due to be laid before Parliament in October, subject to Ministerial approval. Officials outlined some improvement to the workforce profile but indicated it was an ongoing concern. Work was being commissioned to explore this further. It was noted that good progress had been made implementing the Food Standards Model with 99% of local authorities on track with the transition. Four local authorities required intensive engagement and were now making progress.
- 6.2 The Board raised concerns about the number of unrated establishments and suggested consideration of deprioritising lower-risk premises as a way to create resource to address unrated establishments and using dynamic sampling to better target resources.
- 6.3 Reflecting a question to the Board, officials were asked about the comparability of sampling data between nations. Nathan said that there were small differences in the way the standards delivery model was delivered between England and Wales but that the data was largely comparable.
- 6.4 Concern was raised about the current rules around sampling plans, which could allow local authorities to have a plan which did not include any actual sampling. Nathan explained that while local authorities must have a sampling plan, there was currently no minimum requirement for sampling levels.
- 6.5 Board members noted the strong performance in the animal feed sampling programme and encouraged learnings to be shared across the two programmes. Board Members thanked Thompson's feed mill in Belfast for a visit the previous day that had helped create a better understanding of the complex nature of the feed industry.

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- 6.6 It was noted that Northern Ireland appeared to be performing better. Karen noted that, for various reasons, Northern Ireland had a different resourcing profile but that officials were looking to what lessons we could learn from Northern Ireland.
- 6.7 The Board asked whether resource issues stemmed from fewer graduates or competition from industry, and whether the FSA could do more to promote food safety careers. The risks and opportunities from local government restructuring were also mentioned, noting that this could lead to loss of experienced professionals. Karen emphasised the complexity of resourcing issues and how these had been outlined in a piece of published research undertaken on behalf of the FSA a number of years ago. She noted ongoing work with Skills England and Defra to identify cross-government opportunities to resolve the issues. The Board welcomed the introduction of the new resource tool for food hygiene and encouraged further work to develop the tool for standards, unitary authorities and feed.
- 6.8 The challenge of new business registrations was raised, noting that some newly registered businesses would never trade. The Board welcomed the inclusion of the registration process as part of thinking about the future of the regulatory system. Broader stakeholder workshops were suggested to help develop solutions.
- 6.9 The Board suggested a more strategic approach, focusing on real rather than perceived risks, and considering alternative models for official controls. Officials noted that thinking around this has already begun with an intention to return to the Board with an update in due course.
- 6.10 The Chair acknowledged progress that was being made and noted that the system did require review to ensure it could be maintained. She requested a strategic briefing focusing on solutions, their implications, and engagement with local authorities and other stakeholders.

Action 3 - Officials to prepare a strategic briefing for the Board, focusing on the options for regulatory reform to tackle the challenges faced by Local Authorities

7 Annual FSA Science Update (FSA 25/09/05)

- 7.1 The Chair welcomed Rick Mumford to the meeting, noting that Rick would provide cover for the CSA following his departure and ahead of the appointment of a permanent replacement. Rick gave a summary of issues covered in the report such as the three core science functions: supporting risk analysis and market authorisations; managing the research and evidence portfolio; and maintaining science infrastructure. Four priority areas were flagged for the coming year: food-borne disease; surveillance; regulatory science innovation including the Sandbox; and providing robust evidence to support regulatory work. It was explained that the increased focus on food-borne disease and surveillance, had been driven by recent threshold breaches.

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- 7.2 The CSA praised the progress and future direction, including the Food Safety Network and partnership working. He noted the importance of diagnostics, particularly as more sensitive tests changed reporting and required the FSA to stay ahead of developments.
- 7.3 The CSA also noted the FSA's leadership in New Approach Methods (NAMs) for risk assessment, led by the Science Evidence and Research Division (SERD) team, which was challenging but vital for future accuracy.
- 7.4 On Sampling and Surveillance, Rick explained that the FSA was reviewing its sampling portfolio to better coordinate efforts and maximise impact with limited resources.
- 7.5 There was a suggestion from the Board that better use could be made of samples already taken by testing them for multiple purposes, not just the original intent. The Chair said that a written update on the sampling strategy, including the identification of gaps would be helpful to the Board.

Action 4 - Rick Mumford to provide the Board with a written update on the sampling strategy, including the identification of gaps.

- 7.6 Rick outlined ongoing and planned work around Food-Borne Disease including analysis of data from projects like IID3, exploring new surveillance methodologies, and integrating surveillance across public health, animal health, and plant health sectors.
- 7.7 The Board asked about the use of AI for pattern recognition and resource efficiency. Julie Pierce explained that the FSA was actively exploring AI and broader data opportunities but must prioritise due to resource constraints. Collaboration with other organisations would be key, both for access to technology and for data governance. AI's role in scientific innovation, including the development of antibiotics was raised. Julie noted the main focus was on NAMs and novel foods, with industry and researchers leading on nutrition innovation.
- 7.8 There were concerns raised by the Board about the public analyst qualification, noting that the current postgraduate pathway took 5–6 years, leading to a shortage and an ageing workforce. It was suggested that a staged qualification be explored, allowing analysts to perform some duties before full qualification. Rick agreed on the need to sustain and evolve science capability, supporting the public analyst programme and engaging with a wider range of academic partners.
- 7.9 There was a question about international collaborations, especially with the SPS agreement, and about future work on allergens and consumer awareness of precision breeding. Rick confirmed that the FSA maintained strong international relationships and aimed to rebuild links, especially in food safety and science. For example, allergen testing methods remained an area of focus, with ongoing work to address gaps. Consumer awareness of precision breeding was low. The FSA was considering how to raise awareness, potentially working with partners such as the Science Media Centre.

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- 7.10 The Chair commended the clarity and focus of science reporting. She noted that the appointment of a new CSA would bring a new perspective and looked forward to further developments in the coming year.

8 Animal Welfare Report 2024/25 (FSA 25/09/06)

- 8.1 The Chair welcomed Kevin Maher to the meeting to introduce the annual Animal Welfare Update and clarified the FSA's limited but important role in animal welfare at slaughter, delivered via agreements with Defra and the Welsh Government in England and Wales, and by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in Northern Ireland. Enforcement responsibilities were shared with the FSA overseeing welfare in approved slaughterhouses, while local authorities and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) had responsibility for farm and transport-related issues.
- 8.2 Kevin Maher introduced the report covering the increase in slaughterhouse throughput, compliance levels and the numbers of animals impacted by non-compliance; the rise in incidents at slaughterhouses; common breaches; farm and transport cases; the Animal Welfare Action Plan Steering Group; and a covert filming incident resulting in a slaughterhouse approval being revoked.
- 8.3 The Chair raised concerns about the rise in breaches and asked about the effectiveness of feedback loops with Defra, APHA, and local authorities. Kevin explained that monthly exception reports were now being shared with DEFRA to improve traction with APHA, and case conferences were being proposed to focus on repeat or serious breaches.
- 8.4 Timothy Riley declared that he had an interest as a livestock producer. He stressed the importance of distinguishing between technical breaches and cruelty-related breaches. The Chair supported this distinction and asked if future reporting could reflect this. Kevin agreed and committed to exploring how to categorise breaches more clearly.
- 8.5 The Board asked about repeat breaches and businesses reopening under new names. Kevin explained that new entities must be considered afresh but are only granted conditional approval initially with close monitoring applied for up to six months.
- 8.6 A question was raised about the impact of CCTV use. Kevin explained that CCTV was mandated in England and Wales. FSA staff conducted random reviews of the systems and 23% of breaches were identified via CCTV, which helped target further monitoring.
- 8.7 The Board asked whether breaches were isolated or systemic across slaughterhouse processes. Kevin said that themed audits were used to target specific areas, such as lairage or stunning, and recent audits had identified issues with back-up stunning equipment and handling of pregnant animals. Richard added that a number of analyses had looked at slaughterhouses with repeated animal welfare breaches over a period and work with field operations

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staff had been undertaken to ensure the right enforcement action was being taken in a timely manner and could result in the withdrawal of approval.

- 8.8 The lack of local authority representation on the Steering Group was noted and a question was raised about the practicality of expecting feedback from under-resourced local authorities. Kevin explained that APHA triaged referrals and cascaded this to local authorities. Local authority representation was based on geography and capacity. Richard Wynn-Davies added that the FSA was working with Defra to improve governance and encourage APHA and local authorities to act on repeat offenders.
- 8.9 The role of third-party assurance schemes such as Red Tractor was raised and the Board asked about the value of engagement with these schemes as well as with retailers. Kevin acknowledged the benefits of engagement with these schemes and said that FSA published open data for use by assurance schemes, but complexity could arise due to fluctuating scheme membership.
- 8.10 Concerns about the increase in non-stun slaughter, particularly of sheep, was raised. Kevin confirmed that the Demonstration of Life Protocol was still being promoted, and adoption was growing but remained a business choice. There was no clear data on the domestic market for non-stun products. The Chair noted that this was relevant to potential labelling reforms that might be considered by Defra, given high consumer concern about welfare.
- 8.11 The Chair thanked the FSA's field teams, vets, and meat hygiene inspectors for their work and emphasised the importance of continued vigilance and improvement, noting that this issue would remain a regular item for Board review.

9 Annual Freedom of Information Requests, External Complaints and Internal Whistleblowing Report (FSA 25/09/07)

- 9.1 The Chair introduced the paper as a key demonstration of the FSA's commitment to openness and transparency. She noted the relevance of external scrutiny from bodies such as the Information Commissioner, Civil Service Commission, and Parliamentary Ombudsman, as well as internal oversight from ARAC. She welcomed Jenny Desira and Noel Sykes to the meeting to give an overview of issues covered in the paper.
- 9.2 Jenny covered the Freedom of Information (FOI) aspects of the paper covering request volumes in 2024; early data from 2025; the diversity of request topics; compliance with statutory FOI timeframes; and FSA decisions to withhold, which had been upheld following complaints to the Information Commissioner.
- 9.3 Noel then gave an overview of complaints and whistleblowing noting the focus on resolving complaints locally; development work and preparing for the introduction of the Food Crime Officers (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2024; and the Civil Service People Survey results on confidence in the whistleblowing processes.

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- 9.4 The Board asked whether industry benchmarks were used to push improvement beyond civil service standards. Noel explained that the FSA was currently using government benchmarks but would explore broader comparisons, especially in light of the new Public Office Accountability Bill.
- 9.5 In response to a question about whether FOI request increases were in line with wider government or industry trends, Jenny confirmed that they were consistent with wider government trends post-pandemic adding that media interest in FSA activities often drove spikes in requests.
- 9.6 The Board noted that while staff awareness appeared high, 25% remained unsure how to raise concerns. It was asked how the FSA could use this data to identify and address gaps in awareness. Noel explained that the FSA worked with the analytics team to deep-dive into survey data and target support to specific teams. This approach had proven effective and would continue.
- 9.7 The CE pointed out that the People Survey provided rich, anonymised data on staff experiences, including bullying, harassment, and engagement. Data was segmented by team and protected characteristics. Interim surveys were also run to maintain insight. The Board asked about response rates. The CE confirmed they were typically in the 70–80% range. The Chair said it would be helpful for the Board to receive further detail of staff response rates.

Action 5 - Details about FSA staff response rates for the people survey to be circulated to the Board.

- 9.8 The Chair also noted the newly introduced Public Office (Accountability) Bill 2025 which, amongst other obligations, would place a duty on public authorities to maintain and promote ethical conduct and required a code of ethics and consequences for breaches. She asked that James Robinson provide a formal note to Board Members as a reminder of responsibilities under the Bill.

Action 6 - James Robinson provide a formal note to Board Members on the Public Office Accountability Bill as a reminder of responsibilities.

- 9.9 The Chair noted the high levels of compliance and performance, attributing it to both the teams and the wider FSA culture.

10 Report from the Director for FSA in Wales (FSA 25/09/08)

- 10.1 The Chair welcomed Sian Bowsley, presenting her first paper as Director of Wales and emphasised the importance of the Wales team's integration within the wider UK and International Directorate, ensuring a four-nation approach while responding to Welsh Government priorities. The Wales Food Advisory Committee (WFAC), chaired by Rhian Hayward, also played a key role in stakeholder engagement.
- 10.2 Sian outlined the strategic priorities for the Wales team including embedding the way of working with Welsh Government and ensuring consistent food and feed safety messaging across the UK, delivered bilingually in Welsh and English. Wales led on specific topics for the FSA, including the enhanced

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registration pilot for local authorities in Wales, which was a key priority for Welsh Government. The pilot aimed to manage the pressure from daily new food business registrations by targeting resources more effectively.

- 10.3 Sian explained that the Wales team led on devolved food and feed policy matters in Wales, including import requirements; and updates to food law. It was also noted that the Welsh Language Commissioner commended the FSA's bilingual work, with case studies presented at a recent conference.
- 10.4 There was an update on changes to Senedd Membership and voting arrangements as well as recent FSA engagements across Wales including presentations to the Welsh Government Food Forum and meetings with council leaders and the Wales Food and Drink Industry Board.
- 10.5 Rhian praised the increased engagement with local authorities and the enhanced registration pilot; and highlighted the challenge of maintaining engagement during the upcoming Senedd election. She asked about the strategy for engaging with new Senedd members and the status of the Welsh Government's review of FSA Wales. Sian explained that the review was being conducted by Cardiff Metropolitan University and that FSA in Wales staff as well as the Chair, CE, and Rhian as the Board Member for Wales, had participated in interviews and desktop research. Recommendations would go to the Health Minister and could be published by year-end.
- 10.6 The Chair reiterated the importance of the FSA maintaining continuity through elections and noted a productive meeting with Dr Isabel Oliver, the new Chief Medical Officer for Wales, to strengthen collaboration and ensure ongoing engagement.
- 10.7 The Board noted the FSA Wales lead on work around food supplements for the FSA and asked for clarification on the FSA's role in regulating supplements, given the sector's growth and complexity. Sian confirmed that her team led on supplement work for both England and Wales and would be able to provide further information.

Action 7 - Sian Bowsley to provide additional information to Board Members on the FSA's work around food supplements.

- 10.8 The Board commended the enthusiasm of the team in Wales, noting that it successfully conveyed a distinct Welsh perspective within the FSA's broader remit.

11 Annual Report from the Chair of ARAC (FSA 25/09/09) & Report of September ARAC meeting (INFO 25/09/01)

- 11.1 The Chair introduced the item, expressing gratitude to Anthony Harbinson for chairing ARAC, and the Board members who serve on it. She highlighted the importance of ARAC's work in maintaining oversight of governance, risk, and assurance, and praised the training programme developed for ARAC members.

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- 11.2 Anthony presented the ARAC Annual Report, and highlighted the clean audit opinion from the National Audit Office (NAO) on its Annual Report and Accounts (ARAs); the internal audit review of abattoir non-compliance commissioned in May 2025; and the ARAC effectiveness review;
- 11.3 Anthony explained the internal audit review of abattoir non-compliance returned a moderate assurance opinion, indicating sound processes but with room for improvement.
- 11.4 The ARAC effectiveness review was a self-assessment conducted using the Treasury's ARAC handbook and National Audit Office tools. Areas for improvement included assurance measures and member development. A training schedule had been put in place to address these.
- 11.5 On the Report of September ARAC meeting, Anthony explained it focused on regulatory audit and helping new members understand the dual nature of internal audit at the FSA.
- 11.6 Anthony thanked ARAC Members Mark Rolfe and Margaret Gilmore, who would be stepping down from the Board, and ARAC in November.
- 11.7 Margaret praised the deep dives conducted by ARAC, particularly on incidents, and emphasised the importance of thorough scrutiny.
- 11.8 The Chair echoed Anthony's thanks to Mark and Margaret for their work on ARAC, noted especially Margaret's long service on this Committee and the need to appoint a new Deputy Chair for ARAC following her departure.

12 Report from the Chair of the Business Committee (INFO 25/09/02)

- 12.1 Timothy Riley presented the summary, noting the increased depth of scrutiny and the engagement from Committee Members. He highlighted that incidents remained a major area of concern due to volume and complexity and that the committee was focused on improving data acuity and interpretation to better allocate resources and respond effectively. The CE added that the FSA was currently handling twice the number of incidents it had capacity for. A new case management system had now been implemented, improving administrative efficiency and data confidence. Further automation and reform work was underway to improve incident handling.
- 12.2 On Local Authority Performance, The Committee had scrutinised performance data, noting progress in prioritising high-risk establishments. Ongoing concerns about backlogs and new business registrations were raised and it was noted that the Food Standards Delivery Model was being rolled out effectively.
- 12.3 On Market Authorisations, the Committee reviewed the throughput of authorisations and requested further reporting on expected volumes. Emphasis was placed on ensuring current processes were effective and scalable.

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- 12.4 The Committee also discussed the FSA's progress on the Regulators' Action Plan where the Cell-Cultivated Products Sandbox was highlighted as a successful example of innovation and stakeholder engagement.
- 12.5 The Board noted the NFCU's first custodial sentences and stressed the importance of using all five stages of prosecution (arrest, charge, conviction, sentencing, proceeds of crime) to publicise proceedings for deterrence. Claire Forbes said that NFCU communications had been effective and well-received and agreed to explore broader use of enforcement stories across all stages, subject to legal constraints and collaboration with partners.
- 12.6 Concerns were raised about the potential duplication of briefings across committees and reviewing whether some discussions could be streamlined. The importance of maintaining transparency was reiterated.

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

- 13.1 The Chair invited Rhian Hayward to deliver an update from the recent meeting of WFAC. Rhian noted that WFAC had welcomed two new Members: Ifan Lloyd, who was a recently retired vet; and John Richards who worked in the red meat sector. She gave a summary of WFAC's engagement with stakeholders since the last Board meeting noting that much of that had been discussed already during the discussion of the Report from the Director for FSA in Wales (FSA 25/09/08). She pointed out that the information included in the Business Committee papers showed FSA awareness was highest in Wales, and this could be attributed to strong stakeholder connections and bilingual working. Rhian also thanked the Chair for her continued Ministerial engagement in Wales and noted that a meeting with Minister Sarah Murphy was anticipated.
- 13.2 The upcoming Taste Wales / Blas Cymru – annual flagship conference was highlighted and Rhian noted that she and the Chair would attend.
- 13.3 The Chair then invited Anthony Harbinson to deliver an update on the activities of the Northern Ireland Food Advisory Committee (NIFAC) since the last Board meeting. Anthony said, since June, NIFAC had held meetings on operational delivery and horizon scanning. The next meeting would address Local Authority engagement. He noted a high level of engagement with Ministers and stakeholders and highlighted two Ministers' attendance at the Annual Report launch and who the Chair had met with again on Monday. NIFAC had also appointed one new Member: David Torrens, who was a vet and former DAERA official, adding further expertise to the Committee.

14 Any Other Business

- 14.1 No other business was raised.

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15 Questions

- 15.1 No questions were raised by the audience, and the meeting was closed. The next meeting would take place on 10 December in Reading.