

Paper FSAW 19/07/03

For discussion

Update from interim director

Executive Summary

1. The attached paper signposts to issues introduced by the Chief Executive at the last Board meeting which was held on 19 June 2019. The complete minutes from the Board meeting are available on the FSA's website at <http://www.food.gov.uk>. The paper also provides an update on issues of relevance to Wales and forms the basis of the update to the Welsh Food Advisory Committee (WFAC).
2. The interim Director for FSA Wales will supplement the information provided in this report with an oral update where necessary.
3. Members are invited to:
 - **note** the update
 - **invite** the interim Director to expand on any issues for further discussion

FSA Wales Contact: Lucy Edwards
Lucy.edwards@food.gov.uk

Update from director

1. Summary of Chief Executive's Report to Open Board Meeting 19 June 2019.

1.1. The Board received the written report (FSA 19/06/04) of the Chief Executive (CE) as at:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-19-06-04-ceos-report-to-the-board.pdf>

2. Interim Director for Wales' Report on Matters Pertaining to Wales

External Engagement

2.1. I have been involved in the following engagement opportunities since WFAC last met in open session on 11 April 2019:

- 15 May - Meeting with Directors of Public Protection Wales
- 15 May – Regulating Our Future Working Group
- 29 May – Health Protection Advisory Group
- 29 May – Meeting with Welsh Government and representative of Directors of Public Protection in Wales to discuss the Wales Food Liaison Committee
- 4 June – Informal Assembly Member drop in event, with the theme of EU Exit and the preparations that the Agency is putting into place to ensure food is safe and what it says it is for the people of Wales. This was a precursor to the event detailed below.

Lunchtime Reception: Welsh Assembly Members

2.2 On 9 July, the FSA in Wales will be holding an event for Assembly Members to update on the priority areas for the Agency and, as the UK prepares to leave the EU, to set out how we are ensuring there remains a robust and effective regulatory regime for maintaining the safety of food for consumers in Wales. Key stakeholders in Wales are also being invited. Keynote speeches will be provided by Heather Hancock the Chair of the FSA and by Vaughan Gething the Minister for Health and Social Services. The event is being sponsored by Jenny Rathbone AM.

Stakeholder Events

2.3 The FSA will be present at both the 2019 Royal Welsh Agricultural Show being held in Llanelwedd between 22-25 July and at the National Eisteddfod which is being held in Llanrwst between 3-10 August.

Food Standards Agency's Welsh Language Scheme

- 2.4 On 10 May 2019 the FSA published a refreshed Welsh Language Scheme for the period 2019-2022, outlining how the Agency will continue to provide equal Welsh and English language services to consumers in Wales. Approved by the Welsh Language Commissioner, this Scheme builds on the foundation of our previous two Schemes and ensures that our commitment to the Welsh language remains relevant and fit for purpose. The Scheme applies across the Agency and is accompanied by an action plan, which specifies how we will implement the commitments made in the Scheme. Under the [Welsh Language Measure 2011](#), the FSA will eventually be required to comply with Welsh Language Standards, which will supersede this Welsh Language Scheme. Until such a time, the FSA will be operating in accordance with the commitments included within this refreshed Welsh Language Scheme. <https://www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/news/fsa-publishes-refreshed-welsh-language-scheme>

Proposal for a Food Law Enforcement Liaison Committee

- 2.5 Earlier this year, Directors of Public Protection in Wales put forward a proposal to establish a forum for the Food Standards Agency and Local Government in Wales to work together, with other key partners, to inform the development and delivery of food law policy and practice in the context of wider public policy and service delivery considerations in Wales. I have been involved in a number of meetings with Welsh Government, Directors of Public Protection in Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association and other relevant parties to discuss the proposal, revising it to ensure that it is reflective of all respective responsibilities. Operational arrangements for the Committee are in the process of being finalised.

Food Standards Agency in Wales: Annual Report and Accounts

On 28 June, the FSA's Annual Report and Accounts for 2018/19 (For the year ended 31 March 2019) were laid before the National Assembly for Wales. <http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/agr-ld12606/agr-ld12606-e.pdf>
<http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/agr-ld12606/agr-ld12606-w.pdf>

Allergens

- 2.6 On 25 June, the Environment Secretary Michael Gove announced a drive to protect the country's two million food allergy sufferers with a new law to require food businesses to include full ingredients labelling on pre-packaged foods. Under current laws, food prepared on the premises in which it is sold is not required to display allergen information in writing, meaning allergy sufferers sometimes lack confidence buying food out. The new legislation, known as 'Natasha's Law', will tighten the rules by requiring foods that are pre-packed directly for sale to carry a full list of ingredients – giving allergy sufferers greater trust in the food they buy. It is proposed that the new laws will come into force in England, Wales and Northern Ireland by summer 2021 – giving food businesses time to adapt to the change <https://www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/news/fsa-welcomes-new-allergen-labelling-law>

3 Forward Look for Incoming Director for Wales

- 3.1 As part of my induction I am proposing to continue with the stakeholder visits which the interim Director commenced in 2018. I am hopeful that we will have met with all local authorities in Wales and other key stakeholders by the end of the year.
- 3.2 I welcome proposals to hold a second Economic and Social Research Council symposium in Cardiff in November. The focus of the event will be innovation in food and I am grateful for the assistance the scientific and academic community in Wales is providing to make this a successful event.

Richard Bowen

Interim Director, FSA Wales

Nathan Barnhouse

Director, FSA Wales

July 2019